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C.B. Koford  
California Condor Study

1946 (Part 1)

January 10 - May 31

Species Accounts

*Gymnogyps californianus*

[illegible]

Gymnogyps californianus

June 8, 1941

Mt. Pinos, Ventura Co.

Saw no condors all day while on Mt. Pinos from about 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. ~~both~~ at Heyman Camp, Chula Vista, and top of the mountain. Sid Peyton told me that he had seen condors in the hills east of the Pinn. Boris (?) King, ~~the~~ brother of Dale King, owned most stock land there. That area is accessible via Val Verde Canyon by road.

June 9, 1941.

Nr. Bailey Ranch, Los Angeles Co.

I drove from Fillmore to Delano. Turned off at Bailey ranch looking for Jerry Condon. Drove 3± miles west of the ridge into a valley with a few cattle. <sup>Great</sup> rough rock slopes visible toward Pinn Creek, & Jerry probably has some headquarters in that area. a woman at first house <sup>after</sup> turnoff from ridge-route said she had heard of condors and rarely seen one fly over. an old man who formerly worked and mined (?) in these mountains lived about ½ mile S± of the Bailey Ranch gate - perhaps he has some information. The Bailey Ranch area is worthy of <sup>investigation</sup> ~~survey~~ via questioning. Some old timers live on Pinn creek and are reachable from this side.

January 10, 1946

Berkeley, Calif.

Ward Russell, of MVZ, picked up a condor mounted with outspread wings at the Cohen home in Hayward in mid-November, 1945. He relaxed the bird, removed the humeri (one broken), & put the bird in study skin form.

Ben Blodig

about 2 mi. S. Annette.

about

Summer 1942

Can McMillan & Chelam  
then McMillan & Sharden

with ~~ferment~~ the pickup - one  
slave overhead.

Apr.  $\pm$  1942 - 5 or 6  
of McMillan - Big Pine Mtn. near  
Camping Place



Gymnogyps Californianus

January 10, 1946

Berkeley, Calif.

to be sent to Varhies at Arizona. The <sup>skin</sup> bird is in good condition though very old - many feathers missing on belly; head artificially colored. I copied the following data from a card accompanying the bird:

"324 California Vulture. Gymnogyps californianus. C. Conder. unsexed. H R Taylor 1890 Shot with #90 [probably refers to another specimen]" M. Sargent, Cal. D.A. Cohen collection. Alameda, Cal."

At San Francisco, F & G Commission, Ferry Bldg, I talked with Ben Glading & Henry (?) Hjersman (sp.?) about condors. Ben said he saw one about 2 miles S. of Annette, Kern Co., Calif. in summer of 1942. This bird flew low over their pickup truck. [Near Cholame]. Ben said Can McMillan at Cholame and Chen McMillan at Shandon were well up on the birds & history of that section - it would be well to contact them for information. <sup>Hjersman</sup> ~~Jersman~~ said he saw 5 or 6

near top of Pine Mtn. (?) near Pozo about April of 1942. He will send for his notes & give me exact info later. At the time he was with Chen McMillan.



100-1000

100-1000

Gymnogyps californianus

10 January 1946

Berkeley, Calif.

on a birding trip. On 20 December Dan McLean talked & showed movies at C.O.C. meeting. These included condor pictures taken in Hopper Basin. Extensive shots of one adult preening perched on a Ps. near Parking Knoll. Apparently taken in a.m. before takeoff; in warm weather I judged as ruff was down. Pictured also was Frank Arundell holding Oscar at #1 nest cave. Oscar's wings were entirely downy (dark gray) and floppy - ~~for~~ Frank held Oscar by elbows & bounced wings up & down. Oscar reached up to snap at Frank's face or hat at one time. McLean also said a man named Roland (?) Curtis had seen a condor between Sacramento & Roseville recently. McLean showed pictures too of the "condor cafeteria" on Oil Ridge S. of Fillmore. Coyote carcasses were laid out near a blind. The photos showed only a single golden eagle feeding. McLean said one shadow which passed over was that of a condor, & also that as many as 18 condors came there. It is not improbable that this number did look over the bait, but I doubt that they fed at such an artificial setup.

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Gymnopsy californianus

12 January 1946

Berkeley, Calif.

apparently the camera did not catch a single one feeding.

18 January 1946

San Francisco, Calif.

With Dr. A. N. Miller went to Treasure Island to see condor pictures taken by Telford Work last year. Besides Work, Harold M. Hill (St. Luke's Hospital), Albert J. Wool (San Jose, 5435 McKee Rd.) and J. Kent Carnie (Mountain View, Calif., 1249 Latham St.) were present. All but Carnie had been on at least some of the 10 trips they took to photograph condors in 1945. <sup>LT(jg)</sup> Work is interning at S.F. & Oakland Naval Hospitals; Hill was formerly in the navy & expects to be called back in April. Carnie was about 18 & was interested in falconry.

Last year the group took 10 trips - from April to October - to Hopper Basin to photograph condors. Someone had given them a clue to a possible nest near Big Cave - it was hinted that the info came from a collector who had been in there in 1940. The group had been let through the road gate at Arundells by the Arundells - there were "about 16" locks on the Arundell

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*Gymnogyps californianus*

18 January 1946

San Francisco Co, Calif.

gate, they said. There is now a road along Hopper Rim, across to the east above Oscar's nest, then toward Big Cave. a tractor trail runs from this road to the creek below Big Cave. These men thought the tractor trail should be allowed to grow over as it made the ~~nest~~ too accessible. On one occasion a dead dog, found on highway, was laid out on the open rock near Oscar's & the photographers hid in a nearby cave - but no results. On another occasion they got a goat from Pete Legan & let it out near same spot - no photographs, but upon returning to the area later they flushed a bunch of condors from the spot. Don Bleitz of Hollywood may have gotten some pictures there which included condors.

Bleitz takes only 4x5 stills - Kodachrome with 16" telephoto lens. Work uses a Rollicord for stills & a 16 mm. movie camera with up to 6" telephoto lens for movie work (Kodachrome). Work has about 100 black & white prints of the youngster & one adult at the nest & about 1 1/2 hrs. of 16 mm. movies - much of excellent quality. The others present including Dr. Hill apparently had taken no pictures of condors. The brother

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Gymnogyps californianus

18 January 1946

San Francisco, Cal.

of Work (?) & the father of one of the groups had also been to the nest.

Work's nest was near the corner of Condor Cliff between a large stone slab & the main cliff. The nest faced about NW & could be walked into from below. This nest was almost directly below that of the Dark Hawks on Condor Cliff - 100'(?). The cave was about 20 ft. long & the egg found at the inner extremity on the sandy floor. Dr. Hill found the nest when he walked about 10' (?) from the mouth & flushed an adult. The egg was a large one - over  $5\frac{2}{3}$ " they measured with a steel tape. The egg was photoed in the nest & held in the hand in the sun outside of the nest for more photos - this later after Dr. Hill had left as he did not approve of this. The egg was found early in April & the chick first found about 5 days old they estimated - in May; they estimated it hatched about May 15. The egg shell was present at that time & photos show the bird with an egg tooth. Photos show the claws on alula & tip of wing & the youngster held in sunlight. Youngster was white downed & well formed with apparently sharp

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Gymnogyps californianus

18 January 1946

San Francisco, Calif.

claws. Photos show youngster with full crop & holding head up. Chick did not regurgitate on first trip. On later trips it did. The photos show a great deal of handling of the chick.

On one trip adult was in the cave when they entered. She was captured & banded with an eagle band. The old bird was kept for 2 or 3 hours, photoed, wingspread measured, etc. Movies show all this & details of head color. Head & neck could not be held with one hand - very strong. It was all two men could do to hold the bird. At one point the chick was brought near the adult for a picture & the adult snapped at it (luckily missed). When released, attempt was made to get a photo of bird adult flying off from the cave. One of the men gave adult a toss ~~to~~ launch it but adult swung around & ran back into cave to the chick. Some photos of adult & chick together were taken (adult standing with head down near chick). Soon after adult ran to a rock point 100± ft. away, spread wings as if sunning for a while, then took off. No other pictures of the nest adults perched were taken. Work said that 2 adults were





Gymnogyps californianus

18 January 1946

San Francisco, Calif.

seen nearly on the next trip. The youngster was found dead & considerably consumed by carnivores (?) on Oct. 21. Carcass located at back of cave within inches of where egg was found. Scats were collected in cave & given to Dr. Benson but so far unidentified. Parasites from carcass were given to Dr. Herman (sp.?) of Fish & Game Comm. (Strawberry Canyon) - he believed them all to be post mortem. The only parasites observed on the birds during life were winged ones which hid among the feathers. No bones were collected from cave floor tho photos seem to show some. Photos show the usual acorns in the <sup>nest</sup> cave too.

The day adult caught, chick was found drenched with pre-digested food. Adult regurgitated "about a pint" of this too but it was too far gone for identification. Adult was not heard to utter a sound. Chick gave the regular sounds often.

Chick was banded twice - once with an eagle band & later with a silver band specially made & engraved by Ernest Bras. Tarsus of chick was larger than adult. It was the impression of Hill & others that the adult was quite lean & light - about 16 lbs. The



Gymnogyps californianus

18 January 1946

San Francisco, Calif.

wingspread <sup>of adult</sup> was 8' 2" ( $\pm$ ) without great stretching. Adult had definite pink spots on tarsus in front of heels. Adult was tired <sup>(?)</sup> to point of lying quite still at times while photos were being taken.

The group also collected feathers & pellets (condors? - I doubt it) from below White wash Ledge. Pictures of one adult drinking were obtained - the bird flew up onto cliff top from below in the morning - probably it roosted on White wash Ledge or near it. Adult nibbled, picked up, & dropped a limp object 4"  $\pm$  long while drinking. The pool bottom & sand nearby atop Big Cove was covered with <sup>condor</sup> tracks in the photos.

Work plans to complete & show a condor movie. He is working on other pictures too so may not finish for a year or more. Dr. Miller explained the condor protection system to York & Hill & it was agreed that nothing should be released which would arouse too much condor interest until protective measures were in effect. Hill had talked with Pemberton & Cransmiller about condor protection & the possibility of closing Hopper Basin as a refuge on a previous



Gymnogyps californianus

18 January 1946

San Francisco, Calif.  
from Cranenwyler

occasion. Hill's impression was that the main <sup>that action was</sup> reason ~~the region was~~ not being taken was because oil exploration rights had already been granted for that area. Hill & Work both thought that a gate with only a Forest Service lock above Pete Legan's place would be a good idea. This bunch was apparently not on too good terms with Don Blitzen - maybe he has "gone Hollywood".

These men "candled" the condor egg with a flashlight several times & said there was a large air space ( $\frac{1}{4} \pm$ ) <sup>on</sup> the last visit before the chick hatched. A condor article full of misinformation appeared in the S.F. Chronicle in Tod Parnell's column last (?) year, they said - Dr. Hill has the article.

28 January 1946

San Francisco, Calif.

Visited Dr. Harold M. Hill at St. Luke's Hospital in San Francisco (he is an intern there). He showed me articles from Tod Parnell's column (The Woodman) in the SF Chronicle for March 30, April 11, & April 17, 1945, referring to condor reports near Porterville and in S. Monterey Co. and at Pinnacles Nat'l Mon. I got these articles from the SF Chronicle for my clipping file. Hill said he had visit-



Gymnogyps californicus

20 January 1946

San Francisco, Calif.

ed The Pinnacles (San Benito Co.) and talked to a man named Haine who works there. Haine said he had seen no condors there for 20 years. In 1893, Haine said, some deer hunters took an egg there, & part of the wooden scaffold they built to reach the ~~same~~ nest was still standing.

Hill was told of the Happer Canyon nest locale by a certain party about whom Hill is very secretive. This party is apparently a collector who was in the area in 1940 & reported an egg in the nest on March 14, 1940. The egg was found in 1946 on April 3 by Hill. April 4 a goat was put out on the rocks near Oscar's nest. On April 6 when the group was returning to the area, 4 condors were near the carcass, 2 or 3 on trees nearby, & others in the air (22 to 24 total). The carcass had been consumed down to skin & bones. (Forgoing about feeding from Al Wool's notes). Later a deer carcass was put out near the goat - Don Bleitz obtained photos of condors feeding on this carcass (turkey vultures & golden eagles too). On April 7, 1945, 4 duck hawk eggs were collected from the cliff above Hill's nest. Hill has had some correspondence



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Gymnogyps californianus

28 January 1946

San Francisco, Calif.

regarding condors with John Baker, Pemberton, Cronmiller, and F.C. Lincoln.

T. Work has flown over Hopper Basin in a private plane, taken pictures of it from the air, and seen condors from the plane. Such sight-seeing may well add to the disturbance of the condors in the future.

1 February 1946

Porterville, Calif.

Obtained address of Ross C. Welch, game warden (lives on W. Putnam, Porterville; phone 499, box 648) from Chamber of Commerce. Found also that Jim Vincent, cattleman, lives near Jack Ranch (Posey P.O.) in the White River area. Both these men were mentioned in S.F. Chronicle article of 30 March 1945, Vincent supposedly having found an injured condor & killed it for specimen purposes. Next went to USFS headquarters in Porterville and talked with the ranger<sup>1</sup> & 2 other men, & showed them condor photos. They had only a vague memory of the condor incident & practically no knowledge of condor identification. They said there had been lookout reports from Blue Ridge and Oak Flat lookouts in the past, but none in last couple of years. They



Gymnogyps californianus

1 February 1946

Porterville, Calif.

said the lookouts used to have forms for reporting condors - I infer that the form has died during my absence. The secretary, who lives in Calif. Nat Springs district, said she saw one feeding on a calf there about a year ago. I looked at the fine relief maps of Sequoia Nat'l Forest in the office - White River lies in the foothill region. Oak Flat, Blue Mtn., & Blue Ridge (S. to N.) have lookouts <sup>from</sup> where condors might be seen in this region. Breckenridge Mtn. also has a lookout. Walker Basin appears to be readily accessible to condors in the Black Mtn. - Breckenridge Mtn. area too. Talked with Ross Welch, game warden. He had been warden at Tehachapi until 1931, then at Kernville <sup>to</sup>, then (since 1940) at Porterville. He was inclined to be overtalkative but some of his information seemed sound. In 1930, Welch said, he saw condors feeding near Manalith. He took a picture & sent it to F & C commission. The picture showed 3 on a fence & 12 on the ground, Welch said, & he was not sure what the birds were at the time. <sup>Don</sup> MacLean came down to the area with a photographer & they tried to get pictures of the condors but with little

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Gymnogyps californianus

February 1, 1946

Porterville, Calif.

success. They used a pit blind & put a horse & other carcasses out trying to get feeding pictures. Welch said MacLean thought there must be a "rookerie" east of Maroloth. Welch said he saw some "nesting" in Horse Canyon (near Maroloth?) at a later date. They got one picture of a condor taking a squirrel away from a raven, Welch said. The squirrels had been poisoned with thallium. A rancher told Welch he had seen some "big buzzards", much larger than turkey buzzards, feeding on 5 or 6 sheep which had been died from eating thallium (in grain?). About 1932, on Tejan Ranch, Welch said, the ravens were causing trouble with young stock, so strychnine poisoned bait was put out for them - condors & buzzards ate this without ill effect. In the Maroloth-Cummings Valley area, the condors would ~~often~~ appear about 10 a.m. & leave just before sundown, Welch said. Welch also said he had seen condors near Buttonwillow, & that an old Mexican there had told him they used to lasso the birds & use the feathers to make pens out of. About 1933 in Walker Basin, Welch said, he found a dead

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Gymnogyps californianus

February 1, 1946

Porterville, Calif.

corder, but he had seen none alive there. He said also he had heard reports of condors at Indian Creek, Antelope Valley, & even north of Mojave. Around Porterville Welch recalled having seen none in winter. Last year he saw 3 about 3 miles east of Porterville (he marked about halfway between Success & Springville on the map. He also claimed to have seen condors near Fountain Springs & White River (a few miles SE of these), & it was in this area (Coyote Springs) that Jim Vincent found an injured condor last spring (about May Welch judged). This bird was killed by Vincent (Welch thought its initial injury was a rifle wound) who had it mounted by Calum of Los Angeles. I saw the bird, a well mounted adult in the standing position, at Price's Hardware Store, 317 (?) N. Main St., Porterville. The claws of this bird were long & but slightly blunted. Vincent lives near Jack Ranch & is a well known cattleman. He visits "The Orange" bar when in town. The game warden & F & G Commission were notified when the bird was found. Welch wanted it given to the Univ. of Calif. but Vincent wanted it kept in the Porterville





Gymnogyps californianus

February 1, 1946

Porterville, Calif.

area but available for study. Welch said there were occasionally condors back from Mohave in Pine Tree and Jaw-Bone Canyon. He had also seen them near Lees and Castaic Lake, he said. Welch suggested Ruben Gulliam of Porterville as a possible source of information; he formerly ran stock in the White River area. This area is best accessible by a road from Ducor, said Welch; there are many gates (locked) along the road, but Welch offered to take me through there at some future date. Welch didn't believe condors got east beyond Walker Basin. He did not believe they frequented the mountains east of Porterville but used the foothills for feeding & returned to distant roasts nightly.

I drove from Porterville to the SSE to Fountain <sup>Springs</sup> Grove. The latter half of this road passes through treeless rolling grassy hills, well populated with stock. From Fountain <sup>Springs</sup> Grove to White River there are scattered oaks & increasing hilliness. From White River east the terrain gets more mountainous, oaks are close together, & there is only occasional open ground. There was light snow in spots at



Gymnogyps californianus

February 1, 1946

Nr. Porterville, Calif.

Vincent's place (about 3 miles NE of Blue Mtn.) and occasional digger pines. Blue Mtn. lookout should overlook the lower White River country. The country east of White River seems too wooded for much condor feeding. Welch placed the spot where Welch found the condor at about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of White River (town).

Mrs E R Buckingham told me there had been a small article in the Bakersfield paper telling of a condor being killed in the White River district. She thought the article said the man had shot the condor because he thought it was injured.

Vincent did not turn up by 0530 p.m. so I left a letter requesting that he write ~~some~~ <sup>some</sup> notes on the subject & send them to me, & I returned to Delano.

February 2, 1946

Bakersfield, Calif.

Talked with Buford Fox, Kern Co. asst. Agricultural Commissioner, 2610 M. St., Bakersfield (phone 7671, ext. 44). While waiting noted a display of poisoned grains which included zinc phosphide whole barley for squirrels, strychnine barley for squirrels, zinc phosphide rolled oats for squirrels, & other strychnine seeds for blackbirds, house larks, & others.



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Gymnogyps californianus

February 2, 1946

Bakersfield, Calif.

Fox said there were condors daily for about two months in May and June in the Poso Creek area (about 10 miles east of Famoso) when squirrels were being poisoned there last year (May & June). Many buzzards too. <sup>(Fishes & wildlife?)</sup> Joe Keyes was present during the poisoning & took some pictures from a blind - the best of these was printed in the Bakersfield paper (Fox sent in the article). Fox said he also saw condors near Edison - beyond the last potato shed, about 500 yards north of the railroad tracks - last year; a total of 17 birds at once feeding on a dead sheep, and 10 or 15 buzzards. This was in a grain field (now planted).

Fox said a trapper caught a condor in a trap some years ago in the Baker Grade area near Beva - this area, up the side of Buckenridge Mtn, is where Fox thinks the condors roost when feeding nearby as they appeared fairly early daily (near Poso Creek). The condors ate poisoned squirrels every day, Fox said. Poisoning was largely with 1080 (sodium fluoroacetate), a war developed poison, & quite deadly. Only 1 oz. is used to 100 lbs. of grain. Over



Gymnogyps californianus

February 2, 1976

Bakersfield, Calif.

40,000 acres were poisoned last year, Fox said. Two trappers are working in Kern Co. now - one from East Hills & 1 from Maricopa - but Fox says they are not the type that would notice birds. Condors & buzzards are apparently unaffected by eating 1080 poisoned squirrels, for none was found dead tho squirrels were eaten daily, Fox said. Piper, an "ornithologist," from the State Dept. of Agriculture, studied the effect of 1080 on birds. Joe Keyes should know much of this too. Fox maintained that condors were far from becoming extinct - this I believe is a false impression caused by many condors being in one area. The 17 was the largest number Fox had seen. Kalmlock from Denver was through recently & wanted badly to see a condor - but didn't. Fox had heard of no condors in Cummings Valley recently. He was taken aback by my interest in 1080 - said maybe he shouldn't have mentioned it. He has no love for the Audubon Society either - they have opposed poisoning sparrows around farms.

Drove east on highway 466 toward Tehachapi. Light breeze, a few high clouds, & quite warm. Some cattle in lowlands to N. of road



11. 10. 1964

3:47 9.11.6 - end log.  
3.26 - to 5  
3:30 - gone - 3 out.  
3.7 - 1 out. 1 out.  
4.4 - 2 out + 1 in.  
2.0

Gymnogypscalifornianus

February 2, 1946

Nr. Edison, Cal. P.

near Mt. Adelaide. Spent an hour searching with binocs near Mt. Adelaide but saw no condors - ravens, buzzards, & golden eagles were located. Air increasingly calm & sky clouding - a storm soon, it appears. Drove up to the Arvin road and  $4\pm$  miles toward Arvin so as to scan Bear Mtn. and the plains toward Arvin. At 3:<sup>67</sup>~~04~~ saw one condor circling near the head of a canyon which leads toward Arvin from the top of Bear Mtn. within a few minutes there were 4, then 6 circling together & rising over the head of the canyon. a fair ~~fr~~ breeze was blowing up the canyon. At 3:25 this group was heading S. toward Cummings mtn. in a steady glide. Spacing was even at first, then ...  $\rightarrow$  ..., then ... at 3:30, out of sight, but 3 others now circled over the same knoll of Bear Mtn., & these too headed S. after rising to about 800' altitude. 3:37, saw 1 adult about 2000' down the mtn. and  $1\pm$  mile N. of where the birds had circled. 3:44, 2 were circling and rising above the same knoll again, & these too went S. together - at least 9 condors, probably 11, were seen in the foregoing instance. I believe they were working their way S. after



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Gymnogyps californianus

February 2, 1946

Baker Nri Arvin, Calif.

feeding somewhere further north. B. Fox had told me of a carcass above Box Springs on Breckenridge Mtn. Perhaps the birds fed there. By 4:20 located no more condors, so drove to Arvin & then Tejon Ranch. Saw two sheep camps between Arvin & Tejon Ranch. These sheep are brought in for lambing, Perry Sprague of Tejon Ranch told me. Usually there is no big sheep movement from Cummings Valley until May or June. Perhaps these sheep have furnished some condor food. Perry Sprague said he had seen no condors in the last couple of years but he attributed no particular reason for this.

February 3, 1946

Fillmore, Calif.

Sid Peyton told me that about 3 years ago Michael (sp.) had packed a photographer from the east, with a <sup>John Storer</sup> German name, up to the big meadow below Whiteoak Peak (on W. side). He had put out carcasses and got some fine pictures of condors feeding.

About 3 weeks ago, Stotham (sp.) had seen 40+ condors at Torrey (canyon opposite Pine) at a carcass.

Peyton, Ed Harrison, & Redrock (sp.) of



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Gymnogyps californianus

February 3, 1946

Fillmore, Calif.

Denver had visited Hopper Run to collect plant & animal specimens for a habitat cordor group at Denver Museum. They saw 7 immature cordors at that time, Sid said. Also they found a .22 & .410 which proved to belong to Don Bleitz. Peyton offered to take me to 3 old nest sites in Pine Canyon and one in Caldwater Canyon at some future date. A party of Coast & Geodetic Survey men are at present working on Hopper Run, Sid & said, & camping in Pale Canyon.

February 4, 1946

Fillmore, Calif.

Lawrence Peyton said he had been in the San Pedro Martir last August & in 8 days in the mountains (8500 ± ft.) saw no cordors. He had asked Mrs. Melling if any cordors had been seen and she had told him none for the last couple of years. Only 1 or 2 before that, Lawrence said. This June, Lawrence & Sid Peyton are going to Lower Calif. to collect & they assured me they would inquire about cordors. Hiked up Big Sespe canyon to Caldwater Canyon (Kenby's old place) with Sid Peyton Sr. & Jr. Met Lee Michel (sp.?) on the way. He had some stock near the west Fork which he occasionally visited. He said he had



Gymnogyps californianus

February 4, 1946

Fillmore, Calif.

seen two condors flying about & landing on the cliffs <sup>across from</sup> near the old green salina (about 1 mile above ~~so~~ Caldwater Creek). Sid told me that Benley had told him of condors nesting one year on the ridge between Pine & Caldwater Canyon about 400' up from the bottom. Sid also told me that when two condors were collected in the head of Caldwater Canyon for the Calif. Acad. of Sciences, 23 condors roosted there fairly regularly. Sid had also seen condors bathing above the falls in the Caldwater Canyon, & Frank Arundel had taken an egg there. The head of Caldwater Canyon - now lightly snow blanketed - seems to have lots of good roost trees & nesting cliffs - why was this roost abandoned? Sespe Canyon, in contrast to most areas, has become less civilized rather than more. The road now reaches only to the dam (Pine Creek before war). At one time it extended clear up to the bend of the Sespe when an oil rig was started there. The 1938 flood washed out the road for good. Lee Michael told us of packing in a man named "Stories" to the meadow above (E. of) Squaw Flat to get condor pictures. This was doubtless John Storer. According to Michael, Storer was





Gymnogyps californianus

February 4, 1946

Fillmore, Calif.

taking the pictures for ~~an~~ glider company. Over two weeks he paid Michael \$135 for the services of his stock. Three calves were killed for condor bait. The first was clubbed about 5 p.m. & Michael left the carcass immediately - buzzards came the next day, but no condors. The next calf was killed about 5 p.m. too & cut open. Michael said the condors were there in an hour & some pictures were procured [sounds goofy]. The third calf was cut open the full length, put out in the morning, & the stock was nearby. The condors came, said Michael, and one ~~looked~~ swooped on the calf & dragged it about 25 feet [probably & eagle if true]. Storer was not interested in the feeding habits of the condors, only the flight, according to Michael. Michael willingly told me his "idea" of how condors find food. "It is like the way regions released at sea find their way home," he said. There is a certain "blend" which tells them where the food is, he said he thought.

February 5, 1945

Pole Canyon, Calif.

at 3:25 p.m. left Arundell's gate to drive to



February 5, 1946

Nr. Fillmore, Calif.

Hopper Run. Sky clear, light breeze, & cool. At 3:50 saw 3 condors (2 or 3 adults) circling & rising over Oak Mtn. (1 high, 2 low). They rose to about 1,000' then glided toward Hopper Basin passing above & E. of Hopper Mtn. top. Could not drive beyond Hopper Ranch trail, so parked & hiked to Parking Place. Saw one condor over E. side of Hopper Mtn. at 5:15; it headed toward Big Cave area. Sidney Peyton Jr. was accompanying me on this trip. We camped near Hopper Ranch trail.

Talked with Gene Percy earlier today. He said he had seen <sup>40</sup>~~14~~ condors on a saw carcass on Arundell Ranch below Black Box (Palo Canyon). This instance - when he saw over 40 - is noted in a letter to me (see my info file). In 1943 there had been a heavy snowfall. Oak tops were broken & brush matted down so that trails were obscured. This year for Forest Service men have been working out at brushing out the Arundell Spring trail (my WT Canyon) and Spring Canyon trail (below Pemberton Rock). Percy said Dan Bleitz phoned him once asking about condors. Bleitz also phoned Frank Arundell about same. Percy said once this year he saw 2 or 3 condors fly over his house law (about 1 mile from highway) in Hopper Canyon. Coyotes



Gymnogyps californianus

February 5, 1946

Nr. Fillmore, Calif.

have been thick & saucy this year, Percy said. He lost many cattle in the snowy winter but saw no condors feed upon them.

~~5~~<sup>6</sup> February 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Temperature about 30 last night on Hopper Rim, but air calm. Heard no coyotes but saw tracks on road. At 8 a.m. left head of Hopper Ranch trail with Sid Peyton Jr. we hiked to Pyramid L.O. along the good dirt road <sup>scanning</sup> ~~exploring~~ some of the old roasts along the way. At 8:30 arrived at Pyramid L.O. It was still in good shape though 3 windows were broken and some tarpaper stripped off. A good many names & dates had been written inside - among them "July 19, 1941. Ornithology Class Field Trip. Instructor Dr. Mary Erickson. Santa Barbara State College." (followed by about 9 names). Frozen snow patches lay were sparse. Sky clear. Sun rose about 7 a.m. Saw 4 condors in Big Cave area. Two were in a shaded hole to N. of Big Cave. They were close together, wings upraised occasionally, & may have been mating or displaying. Two more later entered the hole but all seemed amiable. One seemed with wings spread on white wash ledge about 8:45. Spotted 3 atop Condor Cliff about 9:00. These were adults, within 5±



Gymnogyps californianus

February 5, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

ft. of one another, occasionally walking about & balancing with wings. Saw one stop the main road tree in front of Big Cave (in shade) but it left within a few minutes. Again saw 2 on a sunny ledge 100±' north of Big Cave - possibly some mounting attempts, it appeared. At 9:15 there was an uneven fair breeze from N. Saw 6 sure condors - 4 in sun on Whitewash ledge & 2 atop Condor Cliff as before. All in sunshine. None at pool above Big Cave - possibly frozen solid. Water in creek below Big Cave but not much - 4±' wide at lower end of Condor Creek. Saw no sign of Oscar's or Work's nest - both clearly visible from the lookout. At 9:30, 3 on Whitewash ledge 1st, quiescent in sunshine, & 2 adults on Condor Cliff as before. We left for Oscar's. In Pyramid L O on window was notation in paint "John Lawrence Murray painted here March 5/42".

At 9:55 saw one circling over E. side of the basin well down in the canyon - probably not leaving the roosting area. Reached Pemberton Rock at about 10:10 and my #1 nest camp at 11:20. At 11:25 saw 2 condors circling & rising over North Point. One adult, one imm. The adult was highest. Imm. had large chip out of left distal end of tail 62. Noted again the turning movements -





Gymnogyps californianus

February 6, 1976

Hopper Canyon, Cal. F.

to turn right, left edge of tail tilted down, then right wing tip dipped, then bird turns. The adult glided over Arundell Ridge & coasted, the imm. rose to  $1000 \pm$ ; then headed toward Hopper Mtn. & gave 1 wing dip on the way. Breeze faint or absent; sky overcast with cirro-stratus. Smoke hanging in the valleys. A poor soaring day so far, I believe, & these birds probably the first out. 11:43, saw two adults circling & rising over the ridge NW of #1 nest cave. They rose together to about 1000'; then glided together toward Whiteacre Peak. About 11:47 an immature had appeared below the circling adults - it had an outer left secondary missing (at least 2 imm. seen today). It circled & rose to about 300'; then glided after the adults ( $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile behind). A fresh breeze now blowing up the canyon.

Went to cliff top above #1 nest cave. Descended by rope to the cave. It smelled of condor but there was no evidence of it having been used since 1939. At 12:30 we left Oscar's & hiked E. to the road (quite brushy). Saw 2 condors circling over the rim W. of Oscar's. Later saw 1 over rim near North Cliffs - it came within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile, circling (adult). At about 1:20 saw 3 adults circling near where the road reaches top of the E. rim. A youngster circled near them.



Gymnogyps californianus

February 6, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Cal. f.

One adult had feet down. Later saw one <sup>imm.</sup> ~~adult~~ soar past us ( $\frac{1}{4} \pm$  mile) heading toward Conda Cliffs & 2 adults circling over the Big Cave area. Later two adults (same?) were seen heading N. from near that area ( $300 \pm$  alt.) and at 1:30 we came upon 6 on a light sandstone outcropping (the ones in air & 2 from S. probably landed). This <sup>rock</sup> cliff was unwhitewashed but contained many potholes, & is located  $200 \pm$  yds. N. of where road reaches summit of the E. Rim. Birds spaced  $\times_0 \times_0 \times_0$ , about 20' between pairs. One each of lower two pairs was imm., all others adult. They stood quietly and we watched from the road. Had they detected food nearby? or had air currents failed. The breeze was light from SW. about 1:35 one of the upper adults took off & headed S $\pm$ . about 1:38 all the others left & took a similar course, some flapping  $2 \pm$  times. One adult had an outer left secondary & one an inner left primary out. One youngster <sup>was</sup> ~~was~~ different from 2 previously seen today - so at least 3 imm. have been seen. At  $1:47$  ~~1:3~~ and adult circled  $\frac{1}{4} \pm$  S. of us then bore off to E. We continued on the road and at 2:20 arrived at its end in the head of

3:10-3:40 - 4 or 5 ft. min. over then 3 more  
8 ft. <sup>5 min</sup> time 3:20 - left 3:50. 3 in 1 line, 1 on other  
on A.R. Thacker - stop 2" length.

Gymnogyps californianus

February 6, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Upper Cador Canyon near Two Pools. We hiked down the canyon to Cador Falls & there saw <sup>(3:05)</sup> 5 caddoes, 3 on Whitewash Ledge (2 ad., 1 imm.), an imm. atop the cliff above them, & an adult 100' to W. of the falls on cliff top. We stood still in full view - after about 5 minutes, the one adult took off, circled, & landed on Whitewash Ledge using the backing flaps. Left foot slipped in landing & was brought up again quickly. The youngster atop the cliff took off & then the others, but not before another imm. (a left rectrix missing) began circling above Cador Falls, & 3 new birds approached from N<sup>+</sup> - at least 8 caddoes; at least 4 imm. These left around Cador Cliffs, then 5 returned, circled low over us & Root Tree, then all left (about 3:20). We found cador tracks near the falls brink on both sides of the pool, but none over 20' from brink, & comparatively few tracks - made by 3 birds at best I judged. One "step" measured about 2" from center toe to rear toe & was about 2" offset. At 3:30 we left for the road at Two Pools, hiking up the rock ledges above N. Cador Cliffs. I saw 2 or 3 caddoes in top of one Pool on Arundell Ridge - probably the birds we scared from the Falls roosted there. Some for



Gymnogyps californianus

February 6, 1946

at Elwhitewash ledge

Hopper Canyon, 6117'

one adult; no condor seen today seemed to have a bulging crop, yet activity apparently started about 11:30 and ended about 3 p.m. At 4:10 saw one adult near Two Ps., 100±' alt., heading S±. Perhaps today's feeding was nearly to NE of Hopper Basin. At Condor Falls, good clear water was running freely though ice formed from spray at falls top. The camp (F.S.) at Pembury Rock was abandoned - the trail up again completed, I suppose. We returned via the road to our camp at junction of road + Hopper Ranch trail. No one but us has apparently used this road since the storm of a couple of days ago. The road is not passable to autos clear to end, but to about a mile from it (if dry). Impassable now due to mud, snow, + water. No sign of the C & GS men - perhaps they have finished too. The burn which swept up from the creek bottom 1± mile below Oscar's to the W. Rim has grown up so as to form a fairly effective barrier to man or horse. A tractor trail cuts off the road E. of Oscar's + goes to Condor Creek below (¼± mile) Big Cave. One adult at Big Cave had a short outer secondary in each wing. One bird had #6 ± left primary missing. I searched for leg bands on close seeing condors - closest adult 50±' overhead - but saw none.





Gymnogyps californianus

February 7, 1946

Hopper Rim, Calif.

Sunrise 6:50 $\pm$ , sky clear, temp. 75 $\pm$ . Left camp at 8:15. Arrived Pyramid LO 8:40. On the way saw 2 condors roosting in canyon W. of Parking Knoll. An imm. on a stub branch near top of a dead Ps., & an adult on a branch of another Ps. 200 $\pm$ ' further down the slope, both about 200 yds. down from road level. Perhaps there were some of these we scared from Condo Falls area yesterday. Ruffs up to ears. Both perched facing W. & still in shadow. Occasional gusts of strong breeze. From Pyramid LO spotted no more condors using telescope - found none on Whitewash Lodge or vicinity. Cervine haze & smoke haze in valleys today. We left LO at 9 a.m. for Whitacre Peak (we being myself & Sid Peyton Jr.) and at 11:15 were about 200 yds. N. of the peak. Most of the trail was snow covered (3-5"). We continued on down the trail to Squaw Flats to the nest cave where I found the egg in 1941. I entered the cave, easily accessible from the trail 50 $\pm$  yds. below. Found many bone fragments which I kept - this circumstance indicates that the nest has been used since my last visit there in 1941. However, the whitewash & smell seemed old & I found no down nor feathers; two plants of about 12" or greater height grew in the cave mouth; thus,



Gymnogyps californianus

February 7, 1946

Nr. Whiteacre Pk., Calif.

I do not believe the cave was used last year. At 11:50 I entered the cave - an adult condor soared 100±' overhead a few minutes later (first seen flying today), then was heard to land nearby. Sid & I collected bones - including epiphyseal of bones, one rodent humerus (?), a piece of ungulate scapula, & rib fragments, & a weathered carnivore-like tooth. The usual large number of acorns was present - hollow with end chewed off. A few bones were found at rear-most part of the cave - perhaps rodents carried them there. The place where egg was found was dry & <sup>had</sup> a slight hollow with a deeper hollow in the center - no condor tracks or scratch marks were present, however, & this hollow was stick littered like the rest of the floor. Left the cave at 12:15 - saw two adults perched in a Ps. atop the cliff to S. of the cave, 150±' above us & 100± yds. uphill. Probably a pair which will nest this year, perhaps at this cave. Here is evidence of the pair <sup>keeping company</sup> ~~being together~~ before nest site before the egg is laid. I hope to get a good idea of incubation time this year - perhaps will find a February egg at this spot. The trail had been repaired & brushed out as far as Whiteacre Peak but not beyond - yet was passable



Gymnogyps californianus

February 7, 1945

Hopper Rim, Ventura Co., Calif.

to horses as far as we went. At 12:45 reached the summit of the trail again - saw one condor, low, heading for Hopper Canyon over E. side of Whiteacre Peak. Saw 9 deer & one mountain lion in the Deer Meadow W. of Whiteacre Peak - the lion deer left before the lion got too close. At 2:45 left for Parking Place & camp. At 4:20 saw 2 or + on ledges at Big Cave. At 5:00 from Pyramid L.O. I could spot only 2 at Big Cave. F. . at 5:07, F. ., the left one in a pathole. Air fairly calm since 3 p.m. Dark haze at 3500±' level. Fog rolling S. over Liebre Mtn. vicinity. 50°F. at 5 p.m. Went to camp. Saw no condors in roosts along the way or on S. Ridge. The condor track we measured at Big Cave yesterday was 6 7/8" from center of rear toe claw to center of center toe claw mark.

February 8, 1945

Pasadena, Calif.

Talked with J. R. Pemberton re condors. He told me of Hill's (Dr. H.M.) visit of some time ago - Pemberton did not know of the activities of Work & Hill in photographing condors but was fairly well impressed by Hill's. Pemberton had also been visited by Cronmiller and Swift re measures for condor protection, & he had recommended closure of the Hopper



Gymnogyps californianus

February 8, 1946

Pasadena, Calif.

Canyon area during the breeding season. Pemberton was last at Hopper Rim on Dec. 7, 1941, with his son Johnny Johnny. Johnny goes to a "trailfinders" school & the boys camp in the Sespe as well as at other areas - Johnny (age about 12) says they always see condors. The boys are well educated in condor lore - Pemberton shows his condor movies to them every year (also still shows them occasionally to other organizations). Pemberton said he would run down the status of the oil exploration rights in Hopper Canyon for me - he believes they may have expired or will soon.

February 9, 1946

Hollywood, Calif.

Visited Don Bleitz at his camera shop at 5338 Hollywood Blvd. Bleitz showed me many of the 4x5 kodachrome ~~the~~ pictures he took in Hopper Canyon last year. He has several of the chick at various stages, pictures of the egg, & scenic pictures of the area. The color is of excellent quality. Bleitz also has <sup>color</sup> pictures of condors on a deer carcass on the rocks near #1 nest cave and many black and white pictures which I did not see. He offered to print me a set of these pictures when materials were available, & Bleitz said





Gymnogyps californianus

February 9, 1946

Hollywood, Calif.

he had sat out many carcasses for the condors in the same area. A horse, which he got from Pete Legan, was untouched. Two dogs were eaten (not seen, but feathers nearby on return). Sheep were also tried, & 2 deer. One of these deer was found dead near Peter - probably 2 or 3 days old & ripped open by coyotes (?) - a doe. This was laid out on the rocks; Blitty found 20+ condors at the carcass when he returned to it & flushed them. The next day ~~haws~~<sup>ravens</sup>, then buzzards, fed, & 6 condors came. These fed on the carcass, as many as 3 being at the carcass at once. A single bird lifted the carcass & dragged it behind a rock. Again one dragged it back into view. The remains were estimated at 60 lbs. weight at this time. Some of the birds just sat around on the rocks. With the horse, the birds sat around but did not feed. Don said he would give me a copy of his condor notes & get all his condor pictures together so that I could view them. He takes pictures of birds because he enjoys it and does not approve of egg collecting or handling of the chick or ~~ado~~ egg. The Work picture of the egg out of the nest was



Gymnogyps californianus

February 9, 1946

Hollywood, Calif.

taken when Bleitz & Hill were absent, & they were not told of it until the egg had hatched. Bleitz is collecting material for a book of bird pictures with some narrative - including condors - but completion is still far in the future. Bleitz does color photography for various magazines at high prices (\$500± for magazine covers). He seems like a good sort, not likely to harm the birds or give them unfavorable publicity. I warned him against the dangers of mentioning poisoning in connection with condors & advised against publicity until adequate protective measures were in effect. Bleitz uses flash bulbs for additional light in many daylight color shots, but he said the condors showed no reaction - at the most one would look slowly around, even though the flash was only about 10 feet away and reflectors in the open. Buzzards gave way to a condor & stood back while the condor was feeding on a deer carcass, Bleitz said.

February 10, 1946

Pasadena, Calif.

Visited Jim Fassero who took some condor pictures in the past - he had not been to the condor country since then with me but was anxious to go again - probably with Don Bleitz. At Fillmore, Sid Peyton told me that son-



Gymnogyps californianus

February 10, 1946

Fillmore, Calif.

Condors nested one year <sup>below</sup> near the cliffs west of Oil Well Pt. (local name) in Big Berpe Canyon. He said he had also seen condors & buzzards at the falls there.

February <sup>11</sup>12, 1946

Hopper Mtn., Calif.

Drove up Pole Canyon from Fillmore, occasionally stopping to search for condors. At 3 pm. saw 4 circling & rising about 2 miles SSW of Hopper Mtn. and at 3:05 saw 3 others over head of Pole Canyon heading toward Hopper Canyon. Day cold (40°F), 2/10 cumulus, snowing over Liebre Mtn. & Pine Mtn. areas. A sprinkling of snow on parts of Oil Ridge S. of Hopper Canyon. One bird at least seemed stuffed - so I judge the 7 were returning from feeding. Drove to near Pyramid LC & was in LC at 3:30. Seven condors spaced 100-500 yds. apart were gliding N<sup>+</sup> over the W. Rim at that time. Upon reaching the LC I saw 18 perched on Whitewash Ledge - some in 4<sup>+</sup> in potholes, the rest in the open. Wind was 30<sup>±</sup> mph from NW & air very clear. At about 3:45, 3 more came in over Parking Knoll & I saw 19 others on the cliff (22 total). Watched one adult over 10 minutes. It glided from over Parking Knoll to Condor Cliffs, then wove about in East Canyon until above the E. Rim, then headed toward Big Cave, put feet down, & milled



Gymnogyps californianus

February 11, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

with 7± others over to the top of the cave. I searched for other perched birds - found but one; this in sunshine near mouth of a cave between 3rd. & 4th. east canyon from Hopper Creek S. of WT Canyon. In years past I ~~had~~ have seen condors (1 or 2) perched in that vicinity. <sup>(Percy Perch Pts.)</sup> The cave was 200±' above the stream; rocks were lightly whitewashed; a possible nesting site. The bird may have been a youngster of last year - very quiet & inactive and unchanged by 4:30 (since 4 or earlier). Even in protected spot it was difficult to write because of cold. The ledges at Big Cave at 4:35 looked about thus:



4:39 - 5 or + condors weaving about the cave tops, some with feet down & roosting birds to make at least 26. One gave 5 backing flaps, feet down, in landing on ledge. 4:42 - 28 now, 2 in air. The wind still fair but somewhat unsteady, from W±. Some condors perched nearly touching & others in same pothole without altercation. 4:45, two ravens soaring near top of Big Cave. at least



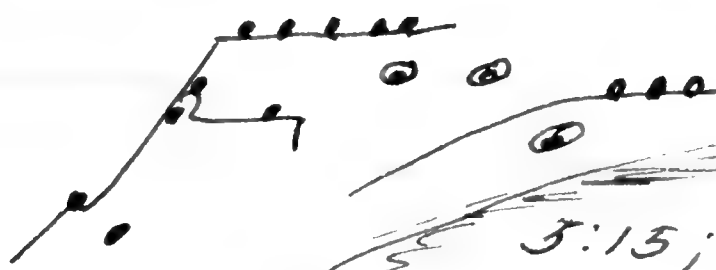


Cymnogyys californicus

February 11, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Half the condors near Big Cave are adults. Quiescence predominates tho one occasionally walks about or shifts perches. 5 p.m. - the lone bird beyond Rock Ridge perched as before. 3 adults atop cliff above Whitewash ledge, 6± in potholes & 16± on open ledges. Two adults atop cliff seemed very friendly & at times it appeared that a mating display was in progress - a 3rd adult stood 10± ft. away. A youngster alighted 6±' from this 3rd adult. About 3 minutes later one of the pair walked over to the 3rd adult - the youngster flew away. Some of the perched birds - especially isolated ones in potholes - have apparently not shifted roasts for over an hour. No birds seen roosting in trees; none, <sup>perched</sup> near pool stop Big Cave since 3:30 apparently; no sunning seen. 5:10 - counted at least 30 condors at Big Cave, & milling in air about the roast ledges. Sunset shadow has crossed top of Big Cave (5:15).



2  
2

2

2

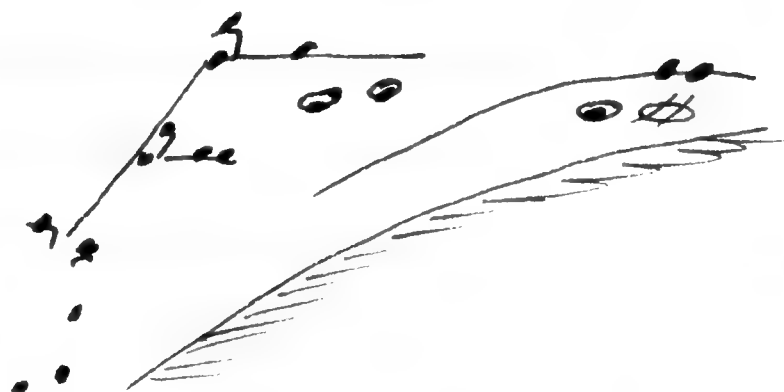
5:15; there, plus  
including 2 on a top  
bare green-tipped branch  
of Roast Tree. Still



Gymnogyps californianus

February 11, 1946 Hopper Canyon, Calif.  
windy & still some roost shifting.  $30^{\circ}\text{F.}$  at  
5:20. Two left cliff top for lower perch on  
rock - direct route, no circling. 5:21, one on  
tip top of Roast Tree. I left because of the  
cold & drove to upper Pale Canyon to camp. Strong  
cold wind continued; snowing <sup>on</sup> Caliblastone Mtn.

February 12, 1946 Hopper Canyon, Calif.  
Sky clear, light W. breeze.  $32^{\circ}$  at 7:10 am at Pyr-  
amid Lo Lo. At 7:10 I saw 25 condors at Big  
Cave, 4 being in top of Roast Tree ~~so far~~, 3 in pot-  
holes W. of the cave, & the rest on Whitewash Ledge &  
near it - the ledge appeared:



None apparent atop the  
cliff or at the drinking  
pool. At 7:15 saw one  
flap from Ledge as if  
shifting perch. Two (1 in pothole, one on tree  
branch) seemed flattened in the roosting position,  
the others standing. The lone bird beyond Rock  
Ridge was still there - about 3' from where seen  
last evening. No snow fell in Hopper Basin  
last night - some on ridge W. of Caliblastone Mtn.  
though. Air dry. 7:25, four (3 or 4 adults) flaps  
glided straight down Condor Canyon below Big Cave  
& disappeared behind (cliff side of) Arundell Cliffs.



Gymnogyps californianus

February 12, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Sunshine line about 60' from birds roosting at White wash Ledge - but no movement to meet it. Breeze very faint at times. Scanned Pine & Coldwater Canyon & Oil Well Pt. area in the hope - good view & light, but spotted no condors. Steady stream of water in falls at Oil Well Pt. & Coldwater Canyon. Left for Whitesacre Pk. Left road on trail at 8:35 and dropped into the Agua Blanca side at 9:35. At 10:15 was in the Whitesacre nest cave - there was no sign of condors having been there since my last visit a few days ago, nor were any condors seen in the area. No breeze, clear sky. Found 2 old primaries down the slope from nest cave, & a tooth & bone tip about 10' below mouth of cave. At 11 a.m. was at a vantage point about 1/4 mile from the nest cave; searched cliffs with binocs, but no evidence of condors. Perhaps my former visit scared away the pair of adults. Was again impressed with the abundant cliffs at E. end of Pine Mtn. (near Thorn Pt.). Left this spot about 11:40. At 12:00 was near top of Whitesacre Pk. Saw 6 condors circling above H. W. Rim, so at or past "rising time". Light SW breeze, temp. 48°F., sky 8/10 cirrus. 12:05, I saw one adult on tip of a ledge, about 1 mile SSW of

[Nest near in 1946 CK]



Gymnogyps californianus

February 12, 1946

Whiteacre Pk., Calif.

Whiteacre Pk. Another adult circled down & alighted alongside at 12:08 $\pm$ . Ruffs high up on both. This series of ledges - on the steep side of Hopper Rim, offer many nesting possibilities. The birds moved 6 $\pm$ ' apart after 5 $\pm$  minutes and were still that way at 12:30. They occasionally preened or looked at their feet - very quiescent - just standing - right sides to sun. Breeze very light. About 12:15 saw 2 circling & rising at same level over W. Rim. Air nearly calm at times - smoky haze in valleys. The rising condors seemed to be using more dihedral than usual - buzzard like. 12:50 - no change in the 2 perched adults; they appeared:



atop the 60 $\pm$ ' high ledge, the highest in a series of 4 such ledges, 150 $\pm$ ' below level of <sup>top of</sup> highest ledge on W. Hopper Rim. On

the steep slope below the birds are many Ps., some with bare limbs which appear suitable for perches & roosts. About 1:07 $\frac{1}{2}$ , outer adult spread wings & sunned back. Ruff down during this process, & the bird preened under parts with bill. 1:10, folded wings slowly, one a little before the other. 1:14 $\pm$ , this outer bird walked around inner one, head down & one wing half raised. The other calmly walk-





Gymnogyps californianus

February 12, 1946

Whiteacre Pk., Calif.

ed to antennae point. First faltered, & with an easy spring with wings half raised, landed on top of second. Both birds stood calmly thus for about 30 seconds after top one gained its balance. Then it seemed that top one had head & bill close to head of bottom one, & top one flapped gently as if balancing. Top bird jumped off onto rock about 1:16 $\frac{1}{4}$ , & a few seconds later took off & landed in a dead tree 150 $\pm$  yds. W. of & 100' below the other. The ♀(?) remained on its perch, unperturbed apparently after this mounting, & was still the same at 1:25. The ♂(?) was facing ♀'s direction perched on a top branch of a dead topped P.c. on a top <sup>a</sup> and west-leading ridge running from the first perch point. I believe this is the first mounting I have seen which was at all successful - copulation probably did not take place unless very briefly. A raven alighted 50 $\pm$ ' from & 10 $\pm$ ' above the ♂ - no reaction. Raven later alighted on top of ♂'s branch - ♂ seemed unconcerned, tho head down, for 10 $\pm$  seconds, then suddenly raised wings (possibly balancing movement) & raven flew. 1:42, another raven on center stub of ♂'s tree - 6 $\pm$ ' from ♂ & at same level, but no reaction apparent from adult. 1:45, ♂ ruffled up wings, then gave a half stretch with left



Gymnogyps californianus

February 12, 1946

Whiteacre PK, Calif.

wing.  $30 \pm$  sec. later  $\sigma$  turned about, facing sun. A raven perched  $3 \pm'$  toward trunk from adult - no reaction (adult preened) until raven flew off, then adult's wings flew up (balancing). Adult turned around again (facing  $\phi$ ) & both adults were in air about 1:48. They circled over head of a steep canyon near their perch until at Rim level. One had feet down. One showed "crop bulge". One with feet down held them <sup>close</sup> together. This one also excreted in air - a watery substance. Earlier the  $\phi$  excreted over edge of cliff, the excrement going straight straight down in a stream. The two circled & rose over me to  $1500 \pm'$  above me, then flew glided to NW toward San Rafael Ph. area. (gone at 1:55). Breeze <sup>? CK</sup> very light still. In calm air dihedral seems greater than in wind, & more primaries bent up <sup>? CK</sup> (only  $3 \pm$  when flew gliding in wind). A duck hawk soared within 50 ft. of the condors several times without attacking - condors showed no reaction. Both adults seemed to have all flight feathers. About 2:30 left for Hopper Basin. Saw 2 over W. Rim heading S $\pm$  about 2:45. At 3:30 reached road. ~~San~~ Air dead calm but cool. 3:45, one adult circled & rose to about 4000' level above Brundell Cliffs, then glided NW until over me, then circled & rose over W. Rim, then glided S $\pm$  just W. of

etc  
air

prime



Gymnogyps californianus

February 12, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

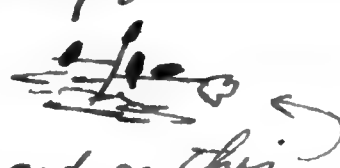
Rim + 1000±' above it. This bird circled 5± minutes above Parking Knoll area, then glided across canyon until 1000±' over E. Rim, then slowly spiraled down in Big Cave vicinity (4:04). About 3:50 saw a second adult over W. Rim near me - it headed into Hopper Basin when at 500±' alt. Yet another seen gliding toward Big Cave area from E. at about 4 p.m. The one which took the long trip (adult) had no apparent flight feather deficiencies. Soaring made a light singing sound. No flaps were seen, but several dips + half dips. Some turns in circling were made without one wing tip dipping first, + some with (usual). Leading edge of wing very straight in soaring - no nuchle visible at wrist. The air is apparently good for soaring though no air motion is apparent on Hopper Rim + there is a heavy gray haze at about 3500 ft. level. Drove toward Old Cabin until I got a good view of Big Cave - saw at least <sup>12</sup>~~10~~ there at 4:25. One sunned, back to sun. None at pool. 3 in top branches of Roost Tree. From Old Cabin at 4:33 counted 22 condors at Big Cave area. 4± were within 10±' of the pool atop the falls but did not seem to drink. Still much shifting between roasts but some <sup>(2 or 3)</sup> birds flattened out in roasting position (1 on a top branch of Roost Tree).



Gymnogyps californianus

February 12, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Usual number of backing flaps in shifting perch is 5, often 4. 4:43 - 4 in top of Roast Tree ~~flaps~~  have been constant for 10+ minutes - <sup>the</sup> second on this branch lay flat, facing NW±, at 4:45. One landed in a small pothole containing another - the inmate flopped several times to keep balance, but both stayed in. 4:48, again 4 at pool, & at least 1 drinking. An imm. was flushed from 4 separate perches in rapid succession by an adult - adult landed & imm. took off to another perch, adult followed soon after imm. was airborne & landed beside imm.; imm. off again - and so on. Air calm; sun obscured by thick cirro stratus clouds. Secured from bird watching.

February 13, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Cold & 6/10 alto stratus at 7:45; fair breeze from SW. At Big Cave I saw 12 perched condors - 8 on open ledges, 2 on top branches of Roast Tree, & 2 in potholes. None was seen atop cliff - I do not believe they roost atop the cliff; probably too unprotected. I drove up the road to <sup>E. of</sup> near #1 nest cave, then left car at 8:30 & hiked down the tractor trail which led above North Point then down toward Big Cave. At 9:07, 13 condors soared from Big Cave area toward Arundell Cliffs, & began to circle & rise together. The first 10 birds came out together, about





Gymnogyps californianus

February 13, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.



100 yards apart, in column - the next  $3\frac{1}{4}\pm$  mile behind. I was about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile N. of Condor Cliffs at the time; breeze very light; temp.  $44^{\circ}\text{F}$ ; sky clear. The birds rose in a rough group, the lower 3 maintaining a separate bunch. The condor milling is not nearly as regular as that of turkey vultures - condors seem to be in groups of 2 or 3 within the larger group. One flew at another  $4\pm$  times as if chasing; these "attacks" usually ended with both birds flapping 5-8 times. It is as though pursued bird climbs to get out of way - or when both lose balance, they must flap to regain it. A third attacked the pursuer  $3\pm$  times in same manner but no apparent contact. 8 flaps was maximum seen; about 4/second. The bunch broke up and  $8\pm$  milled above Rock Ridge while 2 or + headed N. and others circled over F.O. Old Cabin area. I was in open, but none seemed to notice me. Two adults returned toward Big Cave, flew gliding & giving an occasional altitude-losing dip, feet down, & landed at 9:25 in a pothole  $70\pm'$  from top of a parapet-like prominence  $300\pm$  yds. N. of Big Cave. The other condors were all out of sight by about 9:20 - rising time about 9:10 today. One of the adults squatted flat in pothole



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Hopper Canyon, O.K.

mouth (facing in) after  $3 \pm$  minutes, while other entered hole but turned so head protruded  - they were still there at 9:40. Retrogressing - 21 condors were seen at once in the air about 9:15. I continued down the trail passing about 200 yds. from and  $100 \pm'$  below the adult pair - the sitter stood & both seemed to watch me, one with head down  most of the time. The pair left about 10:07 when I was well past them. At 10:00 I saw 3 condors in air over North Slope, this same pair, & 4 (2 ad., 2 imm.) still at Whitewash Ledge. One youngster soared (flap glided) down condor canyon when I was  $300 \pm$  yds. away, then an adult  $1 \pm$  min. later, then other adult, &  $5 \pm$  min. later the last youngster. The adult pair & last 2 on Ledge left while I was seated about 200 yds. from Big Cave. Last youngster gave 8 successive flaps in flap gliding. I hiked to end of tractor trail -  $100 \pm'$  from condor creek - then crossed creek & climbed trail through the brush to foot of Condor Cliff, then went W. at cliff foot to Work's nest (arrived 10:45). Collected  $30 \pm$  bones, tooth fragments, & seashells (!) from inside the cave & for  $20 \pm'$  below cave mouth. The shells & all but 1 or 2 small mammal bones were outside. There were several film & flash globe wrappers, a film spool, broken flash globes, & 2 cigarette butts.



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also near the entrance - anyone skirting the cliff base would be suspicious. A few old condor feathers outside too. No condors seemed interested in my presence though a pair of duck hawks "ched" loudly & dove near me repeatedly. The cave faces toward Pyramid Lk & Hopper mtn. & Drundell Cliffs, almost directly over (150±' above top) the dead Ps. in lower part of Condor Canyon. Entrance large & irregular - shaped about } . Max-  
 imum width about 12' & height 10'. } → E

From entrance the cave slopes up at about a 20° angle to a flat floor in the rear. This flat - where egg was I believe - comes to a point at the rear & the plan view appears about this:

The floor was covered with 2-4" of fine dust, liberally strewn



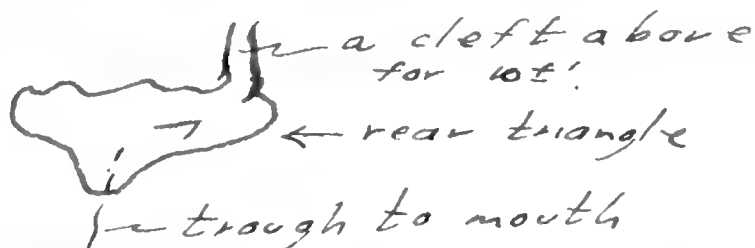
with down, acorns & hazel(?) nuts, rock fragments, & occasional bones. The ceiling of this flat part averaged about 2' - 20" about minimum. The rear 6' x 4' triangle seemed by far the most used the bones were found in the trough all the way down to cave mouth. There was no evidence of condors having visited the cave this year. Excrement (dark) was up to



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18" or 20" high on some walls. But this cave shows not as much excrement or as many bones as some others - the whiteacre one for instance - so may have had a chick only once in recent years. A cross section about halfway in from entrance to rear (30' total) appears about:



Light breezes only; sky clear. I collected bone fragments for specimens & departed cave at 11:30. Had occasionally seen 1 to 3 condors over Hopper Basin while at cave. Rear of this cave quite dark so that I had great difficulty in searching for bones. The point at W. side of cave mouth was only one with even moderate whitewash - no thick chalky deposits here. Investigated below Whitewash Ledge & Condor Falls then until 12:30 - no condors came near. I found 20± primaries & secondaries, & below Whitewash Ledge, where excrement thick, I found a hair ball (deer it appeared) such as work reported; perhaps a condor pellet. Then went down Condor Canyon & visited #9 nest below lower falls in Condor Canyon. Apparently it had not been used since 1941 although one point at mouth was well whitewashed (ravens?).






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Inside the cave there was no condor smell nor fresh whitewash. About 10' from rear of cave a 3 foot long & 1 ft. thick rock slab had fallen from the overhead & partially blocked the opening though not critically (still plenty of room for condor to pass). Found a few bones & shell (clam type) fragments inside cave & below mouth - very few; I probably collected them before in 1941. A stack of flat rocks I used for a camera rest in the cave was unwhitened & untouched. This cave is about 40' long. The entrance is visible from rear end. Opens toward the tops of some alders 100± ft. away & a grassy-oaky bank 100±' farther - apparently a poor takeoff spot as at most can only drop about 20' without hitting alder tops & must fly only down canyon or turn within 50 yds. of leaving entrance. The egg location was about 8' long & covered with 3±" of fine silt. Many large scums in this one (50±). The silt strip was about 16" wide & the ceiling about 3 ft. above.


 x-sect  
egg locale. About 10' out from the rear, a gentle slope (10±°) starts & leads 10±' to a jumble of broken sandstone fragments of good size (1-2' across). The entrance to the cave is a slanting cleft about 8' high. There is a bee nest about



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15' outside the entrance, apparently, & just above it. A 5±' sprig of Yucca Santa grows down from top of entrance. This cave is 200±' down canyon from the lowest cascade of Condor Falls and faces about NW. It is about 100' above creek bed - a steep climb but not difficult as slope is shrubby. Left this nest cave & went up Condor Creek. At about 2:15 saw 4 condors over North Slope apparently heading for Big Cave. At 2:40 saw 4 circling over North Slope. At 3pm saw 8 at Big Cave - 2 were imm.; one imm. swooped up to a top branch of Roost Tree. Others were on Whitewash Lodge. 3:10, <sup>one adult</sup> ~~imm.~~ was chased by duck hawk - the whistle of wings brought my attention to it - no contact but about 2' from it. The condor landed immediately on white wash ledge. By 3:15, 10 condors & <sup>11</sup> by 3:20. 7 at least were imm. Two sunned backs briefly with wings outspread. Adult atop Roost Tree facing NW & preening; imm. 2±' lower & 6±' away facing adult, & quiet. I was sitting 200± yds. NW of Big Cave. 3:20<sup>3</sup>, 2 imm. & one adult sunning backs. One adult <sup>appeared</sup> ~~appeared~~ to have the outer right secondary missing. 3:26, now 14 condors (6 imm.) at Big Cave. One imm. had sooty head but pinkish neck with red patch in front of neck. 3:28 - now 16; 2 on Roost Tree, 2 atop cliff near Big Cave, rest on

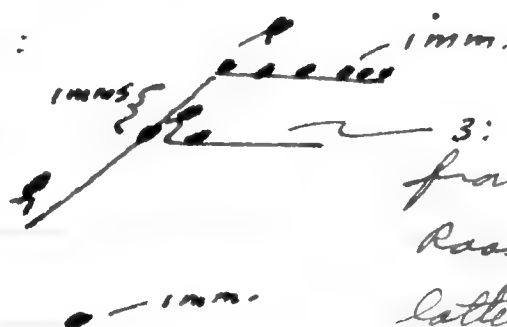


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open ledges. 3:30, 2 more adults spiraled down & landed about 1 minute apart. Whitewash Ledge now appears:



— lone adult

3:33, two more adults here; one from cliff top & 1 from top of Roost Tree. The flapping of the latter made a high "woot woot"

sound of snappy quality. Correction - 8 imm.; one with adult atop cliff - the imm. flapped lightly while facing adult as if asking for food. ~~Lone adult~~

Two adults took off & glided down the canyon at 3:32±. Within 3 minutes, all but 6 (4 of these were imm.) were off & circling over me. They gradually rose, broke into several groups, & rejoined over Arundell Ridge where I counted 18 in air & 6 on cliff (24 total!). I hiked fast up North Slope to avoid further disturbance of the birds. At 3:40 one alighted on Whitewash Ledge. About 3:45 saw one atop a Ps. on Arundell Ridge. 4:00 - 16 in one bunch over Pyramid Canyon - only 8 by 4:05. There was a fair breeze up the canyon at 4:05; temp. 50°F.; sky clear. I continued up the slope. Condors continued to mill together here & there - occasionally <sup>2000'</sup> 1000' above me. At 4:25 they were over Pyramid Canyon. At 4:30 I could spot none. <sup>at 500m.</sup> Breeze light. Reached ~~can~~ ~~at 500m.~~ & drove to Fillmore.



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Hopper Canyon, Calif.

At 5:30 saw at least 16 at Big Cave, perched, so most of the group probably returned there. Big Cave Falls was not running over the edge - water low. Condon Falls had clear water - running slowly. All water quite low for this time of year. Sid Peyton says that Dr. Evermann (sp.?) saw condors "mating" in ~~his~~ Sespe Canyon (some years ago). He said they "acted like a turkey". Sid has some fragments of large clam shells - like Pisimo clams - which were taken from Sespe condor nests. He said Dave Strathearn - the man who told Sid he saw 45 condors on Torrey a few weeks ago - told him he had seen condors on the channel islands. Sid also said that his brother in law told him he had seen 2 (or +) condors on S. side of San Cayetano near Lord's Creek today (from the valley).

February 15, 1946

Ojai, Calif.

At Ojai Ranger Station talked with Ranger Lyda & Phil Cook. Both were very friendly & cooperative. Lyda remembered me from former meetings. He said he saw 11 condors over Bald Mtn. (near Dale King Ranch) about a year ago, apparently at a carcass. He had heard from a friend that several years ago a fresh <sup>skinned</sup> ~~fresh~~ calf had been hung under a tree at Hurricane Deck & left - when the men returned, the calf had





Gymnogyps californianus

February 13, 1946

~~Santa Barb~~ Ojai, Calif

been eaten, supposedly by condors. Phil Cook said he had seen condors at some red cliffs about halfway between S. Fork Guad Station & the schoolhouse in Sequoia Canyon & thought they may nest there. He had also seen them <sup>etc</sup> in Mission Pine & had watched them stretch in the morning. His impression was that they were very dozey in the morning as they seemed undisturbed even when a man rode below them. Cook said also he had seen them on every occasion of visiting Topatopa Lookout. Nordhoff Pk. reported them frequently too, he said. Re use of the Hopper Basin area by cattle - the Trundells have released their rights there so that Gene Percy gets them. The oil company has apparently died - it was Continental Exploration Co., Room 1010 - 608 S. Hill St., Los Angeles. Van Winkle was last man they the F.S. dealt with. Gene Percy had told me the road in Hopper Basin was done in 35 days with a bulldozer and maintainer - in the spring. Lyda & Cook offered any help they could give & were both very interested in my work & asked many questions. The forest will be closed after late June this year, they believed. Former closure at Hopper Canoe Bas Rim amounted only to posting a sign

Mrs. Boyce  
 made - down + center - left foot.  
 center - at Camp - see same.  
 dent. - Cleveland for.  
 King - 1st, 2nd, 3rd steps

June 1, 1945 - 13, head only in dirt - 708m

N of Cholan - down me m. R. Star, past.

El. - Camera - find other not back - oct.

7 mi. N of Cholan - down me m. R. in low land by water. h.

Found 23 May '45. Good 2 or 3 in. N of

Ref. at Sta. B. R. R. Life 1/4 to 1/2 in. water area

at point as by stream. Such data - ca 7 level hd.

Ray Station - 2. St. R. in low. - Rock Tr. Camp. surrounded

alt. - egg found in - nest built - 505 yds up

Raven nest - me m. down - where! with Turnbull + Brown;

cloudy weather.

0846 - Ray 5 - shifted 5' west.

from - 1926 m.

Bob near 6011 - Reddish. 5000

Gymnogyps californianus

February 15, 1946

Santa Barbara, Calif.

on the gate at Pete Legan's. Lyda said the pamphlet on condors put out by C. S. Kolmsee had stimulated the interest of lookouts greatly, & that they still had some of the reporting forms formerly used. At Santa Barbara talked to Al Nollen and Supervisor Nash-Boulden. N.-B. said that last year there was a young condor near Big Pine L.O. The lookout, Mrs. Bayce, saw the adult feed the youngster near the lookout house. N.B. saw the bird at the lookout & said he took some pictures of it tho not good. They figured the nest was between the lookout & the crest of the road. A mule was killed in the vicinity for the purpose of getting condor pictures. N.B. said the condors & bears cleaned it - even the shoes were gone - tho he did not see the condors eat it or get any pictures. This mule was laid out in late fall. N.B. said that Costen had sent him a report of condors being seen in Stone Canyon near the coal mine (near San Miguel). He also said there were occasional reports from lookouts on the Cleveland NF. all the lookouts have not been manned the last few war years, N.B. said. He said he had only seen 1 or 2 birds on 3 (?) trips to the Sequoia Sanctuary. Charlie Tant, lion hunter, now stays at Los Cruces or with Doc Webber at Weber's ranch. Nash Boulden had pushed the idea that too many people were getting into Hopper Canyon



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February 15, 1946

Santa Barbara, Calif.

and thought the summer closure was effective.

He remembered me & called me Carl but wanted to do all the talking and did not offer anything concrete in the way of help. Nelder too was quite friendly & remembered me.

Went to S.B. Nat. Hist. Museum and talked with EZ Rett, Waldo -, & Coggeshall. The museum got one condor specimen which was found 23 May 1945 7 miles NW of McKittrick, Kern Co., by Ian McMillan's brother in law. The bird was by a watering trough. Apparently it had been dead 2 or 3 weeks. The S.B. Museum has the skeleton (complete) & all feathers.

The left tibia & fibula have holes in them as if some disease had eaten away the bones - holes up to  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$ " at joint. On June 1, 1945, Rett, Larry Stevens, & Ian ("Ike") McMillan were at Shandon when "Buck" Cheater told them he had seen 15 condors feeding on a dead calf near Cholame.

Buck said 6 or 7 had black heads. The group went to the spot 7 or 8 miles N. of Cholame & saw 13 condors on the ground. The birds flushed at

(last 100 yds.)

some distance when they drove upwind toward the carcass in a pickup truck. When McMillan is a camera bug - he put out a steer in about October to try & get condor pictures from a blind, but had no luck. The McMillan boys are liked to climb when they were younger & used to go



Gymnogyps californianus

February 16, 1996 Santa Barbara, Calif.  
with Dawson & Tress<sup>dale</sup>. They know where the  
Dawson nest was located (Rett thinks in Cammatti  
region. Ike is best bird info man, Rett said.  
Chen is manager of a ranch next to Ike's. On the  
June 1 incident - after flushed, birds rose fast but  
not flapping. Two returned & one landed; Rett tried  
to sneak up on one <sup>but only</sup> got to within 100± yds about  
100 yds. before this one took off. From the ~~at~~ Chol-  
ame - Parkfield road, only 1 bird was visible (look-  
out?) and the others were in the ditch where occasion-  
al wings were seen flapping. Many Ravens & turkey  
vultures also at carcass - ravens returned. all  
<sup>birds departed 5. after circling.</sup> three birds together at carcass. Rett also told  
me that Larry Stevens had a condor egg he bought  
for \$25 from an old collector who lives at Monte-  
cito. Stevens works at Parkard garage in Santa Bar-  
bara. This old collector (name?) had taken other  
eggs too, 50± years ago. Rett told me also that  
Ray Latham, Larry Stevens brother in law who  
lives in Peachtree Canyon, had come to the  
museum wanting to know who was shooting the  
condors when the two were found dead in Peach-  
tree Canyon. One is mounted at the museum and  
the other at the Forest Service office in Santa  
Barbara (Arch Baulden would not give the museum the  
birds unless one mounted one was given to the F. S.).





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Santa Barbara, Calif.

Another museum bird was apparently from the Big Sur district; it was stuffed with rogs & SF papers of 1896 date - this bird remounted by Rett. Another was shot in 1926 by an old <sup>mexican</sup> ~~spaniard~~ (in former notes). There are 4 specimens (including the last year's pickup) at the museum.

February 16, 1946

Santa Barbara, Calif.

Talked with Larry Stevens, egg collector, at Lockard garage (mechanic there). He said he had seen or heard of no condors in last few years except the 13 he saw with Rett & the Peachtree Canyon birds. The latter, he said, the old timers in Peachtree Canyon told him had been there for years, roosted in the head of the canyon, & nested there. I rather think this a roosting overflow from Big Pine Mtn. area. Stevens says Chen McMillan might know more about condors than I am but that he was hard to talk to. These men are glad that squirrel poisoning will ~~be~~ cause the ~~eg~~ eagles & falcons to move out of that country - they would rather have the squirrels & eagles than neither. Stevens thinks there are as many or more of condors now than 20 years ago. He could not recall the name of the old timer who sold him a condor egg for \$25 - but



Cymnogyys californicus

February 16, 1946

Santa Barbara, Calif.

the old timer had taken 10 eggs he had told Stevens, & once found two young in a nest.

Drove to Paso Robles & thence to Shandon.

about 10 miles E. from Paso Robles the cattle country starts - low rolling hills & occasional flat valleys. At Shandon got directions from

Bob Marshall at Gen'l Merch. Store (a friend of E Z Ratti's) as to location of San McMillan's place.

Met William F Douglas, F & B trapper, at Shandon. My aunt Caroline had taught at same school in Berkeley as his wife. Douglas seemed quite intelligent & a reliable observer. He said he saw

21 condors at Montganeys Potrerros last November (will send me exact date & time later). A

few days ago he had heard of two being seen in the Shandon area. At present he was

trapping the Camatte & San Juan regions for coyotes. He had been stationed at Lampoc

for 9± months but had seen no condors there - old timers had told him condors used

to come to Francamone (sp.?) mtn. there but that none had been seen for years. Douglas

had also trapped in the Juncal Dam area without seeing any condors, but saw them

soon after moving to the N. side of Big Pine ridge (S.B. Potrerros area). Went to



Gymnogyps californianus

February 16, 1946

Shandon, Calif.

Jan Mc Millan place in Gills Canyon near Shandon  
+ met McMillan + wife. Mc Millan said Truesdell had  
told him 5 eggs were taken from the Dawson  
nest - the last of these in 1920 by Stuart. One  
was at MCZ, one at Tacoma High School, one was  
in possession of a man named Moore in Texas -  
as Mc M. remembered. Jan also said condors  
sometimes roasted in the rocks near McKittrick  
(where dead ~~one~~ found last year). He was interested  
in taking Truesdell on a trip + finding the location  
of the condor nest - Mc M. believed this spot  
was probably the farthest north breeding place  
now. He also believed condors had increased  
in the last 20 years. He had read many  
ornithological articles including Harris' one on  
condor history + seemed very intelligent + accur-  
ate in his observations. Re eagles - he thought  
that where there ~~there~~ were squirrels there were eagles,  
and that poisoning squirrels caused the eagles to  
leave the area. About the 13 seen 1 June 1945 -  
the birds took off upwind. Were flushed about  
12:45. Buck Chester had ridden right up on  
them previously that day. This was on Chalome-  
Parkfield road just above county line - this  
area was ~~at~~ <sup>the</sup> usual one for condors. That is  
where <sup>Hal</sup> Johnson saw 22 (see Condor mag) last (?) yr.



Gymnogyps californianus

February 16, 1946

Shandon, Calif.

Jan said Buck reported having seen 17, 5 of which were imm. Also talked with Eben McMillan who seemed very careful in his data. Both had seen a single condor on San Juan Ranch E. of Shandon several times last year. They said it departed toward Mc Chesney Mtn. without much altitude, so they figured it was a nesting adult. Condors seemed never to be seen west of here (San Juan ridge), but only E. & In Oct. of 1945, Eben said he saw 17 once & 19 once. One bird now at Fresno State College (from water tank) came from near here. Jan said he had seen condors roost this side of McKittrick on the old Tumbler Ranch. Re the Truesdell nests - Jan said there were 4 sites at Beartrap Rocks on Mc Chesney Mtn. He had seen a golden eagle chase a condor at times. One of the nests was in the open so that sunlight fell on the egg. One was a hole so small the bird had to squeeze to get wings in. Truesdell said they never seemed to use the same hole twice. One pair (De Tracey nest) was in the San Cayos. Truesdell said that once every 4 or 5 years a pair seemed to go off & nest there. Of the Truesdell eggs, 5 were taken, 1 hatched, 1 raised,





Gymnogyps californianus

February 16, 1946 Shandon, Calif.

1 broken, & 1 lost - this lost; Tmesdell went for a camera & egg was gone upon his return. Tmesdell's second egg was rejected by Thayer as a phony - it was cream color while first was white. Chen used to ride the Mc Chesney Mtn. area & see a pair roost in a pine tree (Beartrap area). About 11 years ago El saw 18 or 20 roosting in some short oaks above Aumake's ranch house, at daylight (deer carcass near). <sup>(Herry(?) Ridge)</sup> Two were trapped there the same year - one died & was left; the other released & flew down canyon without gaining any altitude. El knows of 4 dead condors in the last 10 yrs. - each was discovered only because one of the few men who pay attention to such things was nearby. The one found near McKittrick had been seen many times by Jan's brother in law before he realized it was a condor. The men who know condors when they see them or pay attention to them are far between. Buck Chester & Allie Lewis are good observers. Buck rides the Stone Canyon country & clear over to Coalinga so should be able to give any dope on the birds there. The McMillans think Stone Canyon just a feeding place, but Castle Mtn. is a possible roost. The McMillans



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February 16, 1946

Shandon, Calif.

have taken Tmesdell out collecting recently - they would like to take him to the condor nest area & get the location of the nests. The best way to get into Beartrap is from a cabin <sup>in</sup> ~~in~~ Martinez Canyon reached by road up Pilatos ~~Creek~~ <sup>Greedy</sup> Canyon. Eb thinks condors as numerous there as they ever were. About 12 is most he ever saw in that region. The bird found dead last year was at a spring between Salt & Temblor Creek about 10 miles NW of McKittrick.

February 17, 1946

Nr. Shandon, Calif.

Went on a trip with Jan & Chen McMillan to Cholame, Parkfield, Table Mtn., & back to Jan's place. Frosty in morning; fair wind later, and cirro stratus clouds. Visited the spot at Monterey Co. line on Cholame-Parkfield road where 13 seen last June 1. The carcass had been in a 4±' deep ditch about 1/4 mile ~~to~~ E. of the nearer (w.) foothills & within sight of Cholame Ranch (housed). The 22 that Hal Johnson reported were on the opposite (E.) side of the road at about same location. Saw 2 or 3 carcasses in the general area during the day but no condors. The carcass had been on a flat, close cropped, treeless & brushless plain which was apparently the place where condors were most often seen in this area. Proceeded



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February 17, 1946

Nr. Shandon, Calif.

to Back Chesters place. Buck could recall having seen none north of the aforementioned flats. When questioned about Stone Canyon area, Buck recalled seeing ~~17 or~~ some 17 or 18 years ago near Charley (sp.?) canyon before knew them well. Don McMillan & wife saw 16 at a water trough above Turkey Flat near Kings-Fresno-Monterey Co. <sup>junction</sup> ~~corner~~. Later we visited this spot - it was fairly smooth and grassy of  $15 \pm$  % slope to W. & not near any trees. Some were perched on the trough, Don said. He had seen 3 the day before in same general area. This instance occurred on August 3, 1945. <sup>Don</sup> McMillan never saw a condor till he was 22, he said, so he believed they had increased in last 20 years. His wife's father was supposed to have shot one near Cayucos about 60 years ago. <sup>[Clare?]</sup> ~~Bob~~ Brown (of Dawson? - now in Panama - had taken an egg in the Desquios, San said & had watched condors much. Bob had seen condors bathe in a rock tub at Beartrap Rocks too, McM. said. San believed <sup>that perhaps</sup> condors roosted on the Coalinga side of Castle Mtn. in the fall. Truesdell <sup>was said</sup> ~~so thought~~ to have thought that condors may roost in the Pinasa area near Castle Mtn. We then visited Henry Ludecke, old time rancher, who lived near Parkfield



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February 17, 1946

Nr. Shandon, Calif.

within sight of Mustang Peak & who formerly lived near Shandon. He seemed reliable but did not spend much time looking at birds. He said he saw 5 about 10 years ago going W. near his place - as if toward "the coal mine" (Stone Canyon) or the Pinnacles. He said he had it that one was trapped near Mustang Pk. 30 or 40 years ago, Henry said. He knew condors by the "ole box wings" and the white under the wings, he said. Visited Allie Lewis, another old timer who rides the Table Mtn. - Castle Crags area. He said he had seen condors often - that they usually came in spring & left in the fall. One had stayed till a couple of months ago, he said. They were usually around watering troughs - perhaps catching frogs, he thought. He offered to try to trap one with steel traps set around water troughs - if we wanted it. Allie said the condors had appeared "5 or 6 years ago". He said the Pinnacles area was rough & bluffy - it could be seen from the Coalinga side and was best approached from near Arenal Ranch. Allie told us of old timer Walt Merrill (about 80) who lives near Arenal Ranch. Walt had told Allie of seeing condors when he was a boy but then not till 5 or 6 years ago.





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February 17, 1946

Nr. Shandon, Calif.

Additional re "Kelly" Truesdell eggs - one could not be reached by rope so was left to hatch, one was hatched when went to collect, one was broken when old bird left nest & kicked it out (flushed). San emphasized that condors were not seen west of Red Hills - the reports last year spread from between Chalame & Parkfield down Bitterwater Valley area to near McKittrick. He knew of none being seen near Avenal - Kettleman Hills area. San thought air currents or flight routes may explain why condors were not seen W. of Red Hills. One was seen <sup>in June 1945</sup> ~~several times in July & August 1945~~ near Chen's place (about 10 mi. S. of Kings-Kern-SLO Co. junction). <sup>by</sup> ~~leg~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~bird~~ <sup>bird</sup> they believe nested near Mc Chesney Mtn. Chen thought

one egg was collected by someone other than Truesdell in the Mc Chesney <sup>(Brown?)</sup> region. → was seen several times in

July & August near Paso Ortega. San told me that Bert DeTracy (sp?) who lives near Bee Rock used to collect for H. R. Taylor. He collected one egg in the San Carpojo in 1900. Truesdell thinks there are condors there only when one pair nests there, San said. Truesdell said that it paid the collector to drop everything else & concentrate on condor eggs, according to San. Truesdale would never join the Cooper Club because of a tiff



Gymnogyps californianus

February 18, 1946

Nr. Shandon, Calif.

with Lee Chambers. Chambers acted somewhat in the capacity of an "egg broker". He rejected one egg of Tressdale's because it was cream colored. Tressdale then sent it to Thayer who sent it to Chambers for verification & Chambers again pronounced it bogus. The trip to the condor nest made by Dawson was at Tressdale's invitation in order to prove the validity of the eggs supposedly some shell fragments were found which proved it. Carl Tresselmen, Dan's brother in law, has a picture of condors roasting in rocks near McKittrick, & might have another picture showing 17 condors. These were taken in last 4+ yrs. Near Paso Ortega is where Dan built a blind & tried to photograph a feeding condor. The blind was covered with an old hide & set up near a carcass. Not even Ravens came. Claude Braun took an egg in Beartrap County. He was a good observer & quite a Shandon character (dug a cave in a cliff near Shandon & lived in there, for instance). Now about 60, Braun is a "beachcomber" in Panama. Dan said he will have Dan McMillan write Claude & ask for a report of his experiences with condors. McMillan's father came in Shandon country in 1884 & settled in McMillan canyon. He hunted a lot in surrounding country but according to Dan saw no condors. So Dan thinks condors more plentiful now than since ~~for~~ since 1900 or earlier.



Gymnogyps californianus

February 18, 1946

Nr. Shandon, Calif.

Both McMillan (Jan + Chen) went on trips with Truesdale when boys, including to the condor nesting area. Truesdale carried a ~~low~~ revolver to shoot + flush the nesting birds. He said the condors were often hard to flush - several shots might be fired and the adult would only put "her" head out and look around. Brown had camped near the Beartrap condor country too. Jan's father often referred to a man named Wiley in speaking of natural history matters. Truesdale might know more of him. Jan says Truesdale says one egg he took was at Tacoma High School + was from the Chester Bowles collection. From 1905 to 1920 eggs were collected at Beartrap - possibly 10 total nestings but not over one per year, Jan said. Stuart got the last egg in 1920 - he may still be in Philadelphia. As to food - Jan says that most carcasses from stock in the condor range are probably from the big holdings such as Chalame Ranch, Trusselmann's, Teyon Ranch, etc. for they use lots of submarginal land + rely on low operating cost to make money - labor + upkeep are at a minimum; sick animals are not coddled back to health. In the old days the poorer land was not used + there was no such thing as supplemental feeding, + when drought came the cattle had to be moved out or die.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Gymnogyps californianus

February 10, 1946

N. Shandon, Co. H. F.

In 1877 there was a big draught clear to the coast which killed many cattle. Ranches were restocked by the increase in the residue in those days, so there would be great condor food reduction for some time. Instances like this might account for the condors on Columbia River (Lewis & Clarke). Met Howard Iversen on the road. Iversen Ranch is in Holland Canyon (E. of San Juan River). He seemed quite interested in condors & said he knew them "by the white" and by the fact that he knew buzzards and eagles. Iversen said he saw, about 3 weeks ago on a carcass which had rear end eaten out; this was about 11 a.m. he thought. Again he saw 15 ± at an earlier date. Both these occurrences were near the head of Holland Canyon. He also said he had seen them often on Ad Grant's place. Grant furnished lots of condor food, Iversen said. Grant has both sheep & cattle & lets carcasses lie. He is also a condor enemy - thinks they <sup>kill</sup> ~~eat~~ stock. Met the Shandon High School agriculture teacher (Doncan?) who is quite interested in birds but has never seen a condor. Requested him to let Iversen know if any condors were reported & record date & number too - this same request made of all the people I met with Iversen. The area from north Carrizo Plains up to Castle Mtn. will be well covered.





Gymnogyps californianus

February 18, 1946

N. Shandon, Calif.

ed by very interested men - relatives & friends of Jan. and Jan will let me know when condors appear again in the vicinity. <sup>About 2 miles SW of Antelope Valley -</sup> ~~About Annette~~ - Ernest Still found one in a water trough near there where he used to live; this specimen is supposed to be at Fresno now (taken years ago). Jan's nephew - named Hopper - said he saw 7 once flying near Annette about 1936, & once saw 1 or 2 east of Suenales Ranch house when deer hunting there. Iversen's father has the squirrel poisoning job near Shandon - they have started at Iversen's & will start at Jan's place in a few days - Jan thinks using "1080". From atop the Red Hills Jan pointed out the areas where <sup>there were</sup> half a dozen condor occurrences last year. - Annette L.O. might be a good place to condor watch from. → These were included from Turrelman Ranch to ~~the~~ Castle Mtn. Jan said he never saw condors on the "San Juan side" or W. of San Juan River. Eben said he never saw condors W. of about 25 miles E. of Paso Robles (near Cholame).

February 23, 1946

Bakersfield, Calif.

Visited Buford Fox, Asst. Agricultural Commissioner, & gave him some condor photos. He was very friendly. He said the squirrel poisoning had not started yet and that they were having trouble getting grain - trying to get



Gymnogyps californianus

February 25, 1946      Bakerfield, Calif.  
barley now, oats being unavailable. He had seen  
or heard of no condors since my visit of about  
24 Feb. 2. He reiterated his belief that condors  
feeding around Bakerfield (on E. side) roosted  
near Baker Grade near Bena. The Baker  
Grade road goes up Walker Creek & one can  
travel it to Walker Basin.

February 26, 1946      Los Angeles (Calif.)

At Cooper Club meeting in L. A. talked  
with \*? (well known to Pemberton & Sid Peyton)  
who said he knew two condors had been  
seen in the Santa Monica Mtns. last  
fall near the Los Angeles Co. line, & he  
thought he knew where they might nest.  
He offered to go to the place with ~~me~~ <sup>me</sup> this  
spring. Another well known member said  
he had taken a trip up the So Little  
Besse road this year and had seen  
some condors high overhead. A woman  
said she had seen one close to the  
road near Sulphur Mtn. (Mr. Ojai) this  
year. Quite a number of the members  
remembered me well tho they had not  
seen me for nearly 5 years. \* Sid Peyton  
thinks this was Sid Platford (sp.?) from my  
description of him.



Gymnogyps californianus

March 2, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

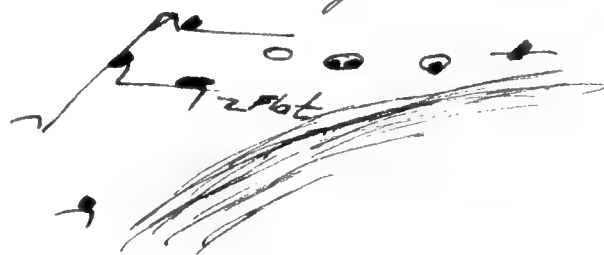
Drove to Hopper Rim and was escorted in Pyramid L.O. at 4:30 p.m. Sky 2/10 alto-cumulus, 67°F, fair westerly breeze. Saw no condors on way up Pale Canyon tho I stopped several times and surveyed the bluffs and skyline. Met Pete Logan for the first time since my return. He said coyotes were very thick & had killed his goats - 40 all told. He once saw a group of 3 and Alon Arundell, ~~to~~ Pete said, told him of seeing 7. I discovered no roosting or other condor activity except at Big Cave area and one bird in a pothole on East <sup>Cliffs</sup> (200±' above Hopper Creek). This latter seemed to be an advanced immature and was still as before at 5:15 p.m. Maximum condor count was 12. Between 4:30 and 5 there were up to 5 condors at once atop Big Cave tho I could see no water there. 3± of these were on nodules 100±' back from the cliff brink - water there? Saw one adult "chase" another, both swooping low in front of Big Cave, then rising sharply, flapping. One alighted atop cliff & the other continued soaring. 2± Saw one adult land in a small pothole already containing an



GymnogypscalifornianusMarch 2, 1946  
~~February~~

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

adult, & one quickly left. At 5:25 counted 12 at Big Cave alone & 13th on East Cliffs as before. Of the 12, 2 at pool area atop Big Cave & 2 others (it appeared like a youngster with wings flapping, "begging" to be fed) were atop cliff over the cave. Before 5 p.m. 2± on ledges or in pothole seemed perched flat as if settled for the night but standing later. At 5:30 at least 3 in potholes near Big Cave; only 1 visible atop cliff. One ~~perched~~ <sup>perched</sup> flat on Whitewash Ledge. As the number of condors in Hopper Basin fluctuates so, even in winter, the area may not be absolutely essential to condor survival. 5:35, one shifted from cliff top to Whitewash Ledge - the ledge appeared thus:



Three atop Roost

Tree, well separated,

thus: 

5:45, the birds still appeared as diagrammed except the flattened one now gone from the ledge. None visible on cliff tops - I can't recall ever having seen any atop cliffs late in the evening; apparently cliff tops are undesirable roosts. "Sunning" posture is apparently infrequent before going to roost in late afternoon and evening.





Gymnogyps californianus

March 2, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

5:53, two flapped 5 $\pm$  across Big Cave & alighted in separate potholes on the N $\pm$  facing cliff. The lowest visible perched (on cliff below Whitewash Ledge) also flew across to a pothole near these two. 5:55 - sunset 10 $\pm$  min. ago. I saw one flapping condor alight on Whitewash Ledge. Apparently I arrived at the Rim after "roosting time" today as I have seen no condors above the horizon. 6:01 - Whitewash Ledge appeared:



6:03, still 3 atop Roost Tree, about as last diagrammed. The (marked X)

last bird to alight on Whitewash Ledge & flapped off. Lowest bird on Whitewash Ledge perched flat as if set for the night. Those on Roost Tree as before. Air very still now & cool (56°F). 6:10; ceased observation because of darkness.

March 3, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

At 7:15 a.m. left camp at Old Cabin and proceeded down Spring Canyon to visit Greta's nest cave. Sky clear, temp. 40°F, gusts of strong W. breeze. The old trail was virtually gone beyond Spring Canyon Meadow but I found enough of it to make



Gymnogyps californianus

March 3, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Cal. f.


progress. At about 7:30 I saw what appeared to be 2 condors roosting in separate green Pseudotsuga on N. slope near Arundell Saddle. The lower one,  $100 \pm$  yds. downhill from the saddle, was about 20' from tree top on the bare part of a heavy horizontal branch. About 8:05 I saw this lower one ruffle up the wings, the bird was then in sunshine - and at 8:15 it took off, glided toward East Canyon with 2 or 3 wing dips, circled  $5 \pm$  times, rising steeply sometimes and then losing altitude sharply with a wing dip. A second condor circled below it after a few minutes, & both glided toward Big Cave. The ~~upper~~ <sup>other</sup> roosting condor -  $50 \pm$  yds. up the slope of Arundell Ridge from the first - I did not verify later. By 8:15 a steady strong westerly breeze - the condors soared & gained altitude with apparent ease. Rising over an E. slope with W. wind seems to indicate use of rising air currents. These two I suppose went to Big Cave to drink or join the gang. I was over 1000 yds. from the bird when it flew so probably didn't disturb it. at 9:30 I was below Arundell Cliffs, halfway ~~up the~~ <sup>between</sup> slope between creek & cliffs. I



Gymnogyps californicus

March 3, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

at least 9 condors then at Whitewash Ledge, at least 2 summing loches. About 9:40 saw at least 5 on a flatish place below the ledge. An adult & youngster stood side by side at edge of a shadow, apparently pecking at the rock or plants. ~~Ado~~ These two wrestled with heads & necks a bit, then youngster slid sidewise 10±' down the rock, wings flapping but did not take off. ~~to~~ 1 to 3 of the other birds (of the 5) were also imm. Three birds (adult & 2 imm) were still on this flat at 10:15 - the only condors visible in ~~the~~ Big Cave area then. About 9:30 I saw 2 adults soar together down Condor Canyon. One chased the other, both dove, then rose flapping. At 9:33 at least 4 were in air over Big Cave - "rising time" about 10 a.m. I judged. About 9:45 I saw 1 adult displaying at another for 3± minutes atop Big Cave. Wings of displayer were held  & head down near feet. The displayer paced back & forth for a few feet about 1 to 5' from displayee, sometimes apparently almost touching the latter. Displayee showed no reaction - just stood



Gymnogyis californianus

March 3, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

as near as I could see. ~~about~~ One of the pair took off & the other remained (about 9:48). About 10 a.m. two adults alighted atop N. Arundell Cliffs about 400' E. of Cave Point. Both had ruffs down showing magenta spot at base of neck ventrally & light grey above this, then orange of head. One displayed at the other, head upside down and wings as before diagrammed. Displayer took very long steps it seemed in pacing back & forth. He (?) stopped & recommenced a few times. His (?) cheeks were puffed & crop bulged, showing magenta patch. She (?) had no hudge but same head coloring. Maximum reaction was that displayee nibbled head of displayer - I had 20x telescope on these birds about 1/4 mile away in sunshine. About 10:03 both stood quiet - I made some mistakes in putting on a sweater. Both adults soared directly across canyon & 70±' above me. I was 500±' W. of Greta's nest at this time. After a few turns, the displayer alighted atop a Pseudotsuga 75± yds. W. of Greta's nest & displayer - crop still bulging & a ragged patch in left secondaries - circled over me for 5± minutes - sometimes 1/4 mile away.






Gymnogyps californianus

March 3, 1946.

Hopper Canyon, Cal.

At about 10:08 the two adults soared toward East Canyon together. During display, display-ee too seemed to have big cheeks. Both seemed to have unwrinkled necks. After the display ruffs went up to heads - cool strong breeze still. About  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile W. of Greta's cave at 9:30 I found an old condor humerus (my no. 203), well weathered, with surface broken away at several spots near the tips. In flight, tail of adult showed considerable <sup>maximum flaps counted - 7.</sup> ruffling, only center feathers being flush with back . At 10:35, 2 imm. & 1 adult still on the flat ledge near foot of Whitewash Ledge - all quite inactive. The immatures just perched, back to sun, 10'± apart, perhaps occasionally preening. No other condors visible. Sky  $\frac{2}{10}$  cumulus clouds moving 5'±; breeze up the canyon (E±) at base of Arundell Cliffs. I went to top of Arundell Cliffs & then down to Greta's nest-#2 nest cave. At 11:05, before reaching the cave, I saw an adult soaring 500'± overhead. In the cave I found an egg. The egg was pale blue, slightly more pointed at one end than the other, & more elongated than the one I photographed near Whiteacre Pk. in 1941. There was some dark



Gymnogyps californicus

March 3, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

excrement on the egg. It lay about 4' inside the cave in good light (from NW) and was about 8" from the rear wall and 8" from SW wall. There was no depression in the floor litter - in fact, I collected 3 $\pm$  bones within 3 $\pm$ " of the egg, some touching it. The egg lay NE-SW, the NE end being longer & axis of cave being NW. I lifted the egg & tilted it - it felt solid & heavy, but I could not candle it by daylight. I gathered about 15 bones & bone fragments hurriedly & left. At 11:25 I was going down the slope & flushed an adult from top of a green Pseudotsuga about 150 yds. NW of the nest cave. The taking off flaps gave a loud "woonsh" sound - earlier in the day I could hear no sound from flap gliding flaps of close adult. This adult had no missing large feathers & crop did not bulge. The rock trough at entrance to nest cave & two points at cave mouth had conspicuous fresh whitewash. I walked downstream and at 11:48 again saw an adult circling over the nest cave area (call it #11 nest, or Beta II). This nest cave is poor for any but closeup photography as sun does not shine in and one can see the egg from no point nearer than



Gymnogyps californianus

March 3, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile. Found a hobnail track in the canyon bottom where I had never been - one of Work's friends or a C + G S man? 12:38, from junction of Cordera Creek with main Hopper Creek, saw one 1500±' overhead going toward Big Cave <sup>area</sup> and at 12:40 12:3 an adult 1000±' overhead heading for East Canyon. Breeze still strong & soaring conditions apparently very good. Found two fresh primaries below Arundell Cliffs & one near #9 nest cave near Cordera Falls. Checked in this cave again as at 1:30 I saw an adult flap down the canyon there - apparently there had been no recent condor visitation. Bone fragments in #2 nest indicates that it has been used at least once since my last visit (1941 probably) - but the whitewash & smell did not seem to indicate use last year. There were two adult feathers but no down in the cave. I was searching from near Cordera Falls when at 2:05 I saw an adult spiraling go down, feet down, over East Cliffs. It landed - apparently in the brush - at about 2:06. I watched, & one left that spot at 2:17 and landed in a cave in a bluff on the ridge at S. side of mouth of East Canyon and about  $\frac{5}{10}$  of the way up from creek to top



Gymnogyps californianus

March 3, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Gila

knoll - 500±' above creek bed. The cave app-  
eared to face W. and had a large (<sup>5 ft' high</sup> ~~at least~~) mouth,  
& was apparently quite shallow. The adult was  
still in this cave - a small part of bird visible -  
at 2:32. Sky 4/10 cumulus, fair breeze, at 2:30.  
Retreating - at about 1:40 I saw 4, all adults  
apparently, circling, ~~flapping~~ <sup>flapping after</sup> ~~gliding~~,  
near + over SE corner of North Slope. One seemed  
to be chasing another while rising & flapping.  
Flaps were about 6/2½ seconds - 7 maximum  
number of consecutive flaps seen. Once the  
chased bird flapped faster than the normal  
tempo for 6± flaps - as if to elude pursuer.  
I went higher on North Slope to view White-  
wash Ledge & #11 nest. Counted 16 condors  
total - 7 in air - at Big Cave area at 2:50.  
The 7 next circled over foot of East Canyon  
and grew to 10, then over Drundell Ridge & grew  
to 13. 11 were on cliff - so at least 24  
condors, & at least 5 of these immature.  
One imm. had orange head but sooty as if  
still covered with black small feathers. The  
cave where lone adult was perched proved to  
be well whitened at mouth and apparently  
a pathole roost. I have seen condors roosting  
there on previous occasions. The brush episode





Gymnogyps californianus

March 3, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

I don't understand - perhaps a drink at a <sup>small</sup> ~~observation from W. side later showed a rock point in that vicinity.~~ <sup>small</sup> pool or trickle? No ravens or turkey vultures

there so food doubtful. At 3:10, 13 perched at Big Cave area, all separate & quiescent.

Wind cold & about 20 mph from NW - sky 6/10 cumulus moving SE - I think the canyon will soon be fogged in. Went to Cave Point, arriving

at 3:30. At 3:35<sup>35</sup> saw 19 condors at Big Cave

area, 8 being immatures. One adult displayed at another standing very close & even put its foot on the head of the displayer. At 3:40 it

commenced to snow lightly. I proceeded to North Point where at 4:10 I saw 7 condors in air near Big Cave - 3 about 1,000' above it partially obscured by cloud bases. I

reached road at North Creek at 5 pm & continued on to Old Cabin on road. Saw car tracks & footprints of a man & boy near head of Hopper Basin. Strong cold wind continued on into the night.

March 4, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Freezing during night. Wind died about 7:00 a.m.

Sky clear. At 8 a.m. I was at Old Cabin. Saw at least 10 condors at Big Cave. One was atop cliff, sunning back, wings outspread. One in shaded pothole to W. of Cave. Others in sun on white wash ledge. At 8:15 I left



Gymnogyps californianus

March 7, 1946

Whiteacre  
~~Hop~~ Pk., Calif.

the road and hiked to Whiteacre Peak. At 9:45 I was stop a cliff about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile W. of the old nest cave on the Agua Blanca side of the peak. I saw no condors nor <sup>any egg</sup> anything in the egg compartment of the nest cave. Two duck hawks were hunting in the vicinity. By 10 a.m. there was a fair westerly breeze. Up to 4 turkey vultures constantly in sight in air. By 11:30 saw no condors so proceeded back up to Whiteacre Pk. At 12:00 saw one circling at 300'± altitude over E. side of the peak - it glided S. Continued on to road, reaching it at 1:10. Warm & calm at 2 p.m. I drove to ~~Pale Canyon~~ Parking Place. Saw no condors by 3:10 p.m. - air was very calm, & this fact may have delayed the return of the birds. Drove down Pale Canyon to Fillmore seeing no condors on the way.

March 8, 1946

Hopper Ranch, Calif.

Arranged to get a 20 year old horse named "Star" from Gene Percy for use as condor bait. Percy reiterated his experience of once seeing several condors feeding on an old horse hide; when flushed the birds flew off but returned quickly. This was in cold weather & the condors acted very hungry on this occasion. Sid Peyton



Gymnogyps californianus

March 8, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

told me he thought that Frank Arundell took his first egg from the bluffs in Pole Canyon. Drove from Fillmore to Hopper River (head of Hopper Ranch trail) arriving at 5:30 p.m. then hiked down to Percy Ranch. Saw no condors. Fair ~~over~~ east wind at 3:30 & fairly warm.

March 9, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Obtained a large sored horse of 20 years age at Hopper Ranch from Gene Percy. Led horse to Hopper River & on out to Old Cabin (arriving 11:00). At 10:15 saw only 1 possible condor at Whitewash Gap. Fair east wind, warm & very dry. Wind died about 11:30. Met Telford Work at Old Cabin. He proceeded out to vicinity of #1 nest to set up a cave blind & I led the horse out the road. We shot the horse about 8 times with a 22 pistol & laid the body out about 40 ft. from the blind. The body lay on open rocks with belly toward blind. Blind was about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile <sup>NW.</sup> of #1 nest cave facing about S. We entered blind at 1:20. The horse bled a couple of gallons through the mouth, the blood running down the



Gymnogyps californianus

March 9, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

rocks. Very clear today. Had seen no condors in air up to time entered blind - seems extraordinary for this time of year here. ~~Perhaps~~ Sid Peyton told me that this is the driest year he has ever known in Fillmore area. If condor presence in Hopper Basin depends somewhat on water supply, the effect should be noticeable this year. No condors or other birds visited the carcasses by 3:30. We went back to the road, drove to the head of the tractor trail to Condor Creek, & hiked down the trail to about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile NW of Big Cave. At 4:10 saw at least 6 condors there (2 adults). By 4:30 saw at least 14 total, at least 5 of these being immatures, and possibly 17 (7 imm.). One was perched atop Roost Tree. Two were in potholes. One to 3 on Whitewash Ledge. There was a close group atop cliff over Whitewash Ledge - 8 or 9 condors within about a 10 ft. diameter. This group started with about 3 adults & 2 youngsters, & incoming birds joined it. One adult was seen to peck at a youngster. ~~seen~~. The farthest away flying birds were seen over foot of East Canyon, circling





Gymnogyps californianus

March 9, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Cal.

and rising. About 4 condors were seen in vicinity of the pool atop Big Cave (dry?). We left & hiked up the trail at 4:45. at that time there were about 7 condors in air milling above Big Cave. Later there were 9. Only about 3 at 5 p.m. These birds were probably disturbed by our presence tho none of them soared close over us. The last arriving birds got to Big Cave about 4:30 p.m. - a rather late arrival time I believe, possibly due to distant travel today or to light breezes in the afternoon. Sky clear but heavy haze to about 4500 ft. level. We went to Old Cabin to camp. Work told me that Dan Blitzen brought a man from Collier's magazine & a female model up to the Work condor nest on the day the chick was found dead. Reputedly this was for the purpose of getting pictures & an article for Collier's. Work also said his group found 2 adults hanging around Arundell Cliffs quite consistently last year. He also said the road through the head of Hopper Canyon had been ~~go~~ gone over & repaired since his last visit here (Oct. '45). He said he had spent 5 days in ~~the same~~ blinds trying to get pictures



Gymnogyps californianus

March 9, 1946 Hopper Canyon, Calif.  
of condors <sup>feeding</sup> but without results. On one occasion  
they saw 22 sure (Wood counted 24) condors in  
air & perched on trees at head of Hopper Canyon when  
they returned to a carcass they had put there.  
Between 11<sup>a.m.</sup> and 2<sup>p.m.</sup> he thought the most  
likely time for condors to show up at the  
bait. One of the immatures seen had a  
pinkish neck but sooty head - from top  
head appeared like imm. but from below  
like adult. Some of the adults which  
alighted atop cliff dropped straight  
down vertically, flapping with wing tips.  
March 10, 1946 Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Still night. Cirrus clouds in morning.  
54°F. at 9 a.m. At 9:15 a.m. we were at  
head of the canyon & saw 2 condors gliding  
northward at about 500 ft. altitude. They  
passed about 200 yds. W. of horse carcass it  
appeared & continued on toward Whiteacre Pk.  
without circling. At 9:20 we were in blind  
at horse carcass. The carcass showed no  
evidence of molestation by carnivores. At  
10:20 I heard one raven croaking close at  
hand - apparently circling over the carcass  
but out of our sight. Occasionally thereafter  
heard a raven croak or saw a shadow pass



Gymnogyps californianus

March 10, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

the blind front. The 10' x 4' cave entrance was covered by pieces of white ply composition board & cloth. The cloth flapped much & had 2 holes for Worlie's cameras. At about 2 p.m. two ravens alighted 15' ± from the carcass, nibbled at dried blood, & carried off pieces of it. About 2:05 they started on the carcass & pulled hair from legs, side, belly, & head. Later one worked about 15 minutes at the exposed eye & reduced it to a socket with white tissue protruding.

One or 2 ravens were on carcass almost constantly until 2:45 but apparently made no holes in the skin. Sky clear & fair breeze. By 4 p.m. no more action at the carcass. We left blind. The ravens had made no holes in hide of the horse. The <sup>horse was</sup> ~~whole animal~~ now swollen and smelled strongly from 50 yards away.

at 4:10 saw 2 condors circling over North Point.

at about 4:20 they headed toward Drundell Ridge.

We drove back to Old Cabin and Wark left for

Los Angeles. At 4:45 from Old Cabin I counted

10 condors (4 in air) at Big Cave (1 atop Raven Tree,

others on Whitewash ledge). Sky 9/10 cirrostratus;

dark <sup>haze</sup> ~~mist~~ to 4000 ft. level; fair W. wind.

At 4:50 saw 12 condors at Big Cave (8 on Whitewash



Gymnogyps californianus

March 10, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Ledge, 2 atop Roost Tree, 1 in path hole just w. of Big Cove, 1 soaring about roost points. I went to Spring Canyon Meadow & searched Arundell Ridge but saw no condors there. At 5:10 saw 5 in air over Condor Cliff & Big Cove area and at 5:35 2 in air there. Air clear & still. Returned to Old Cabin to camp.

March 11, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Frost in morning & fair NW breeze. At 7 a.m. there was fog at about 4000 ft. level up the canyon to East Canyon & up Serpe Canyon to Sulphur Pk. Before 9 a.m. I was settled in the blind by horse carcass as of yesterday. Air calm much of the time. Fog melting somewhat. A red tailed hawk flapped a great deal in flying as if air was unsoarable. At about 8 a.m. I saw one raven flying near the carcass. The horse was dripping juice now at several points and was considerably bloated but hide still unbroken. There was a continuous hissing or gurgling from the carcass as if gas were escaping. T. Work yesterday gave me a condor

reference: Bulletin No. - 23. Feb. 10, 1926. By Walter Fry, In charge Nature Guide Service, Sequoia National Park. This consisted of 2 mimeographed pages including several sight records. At 9:30

two ravens alighted at the carcass, pecked at





Gymnogyps californianus

March 11, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

eye & anus & pulled hair from the side and left about 9:45. ~~Clear~~ Fog had risen to about 3000 ft. level but left Hopper Basin uncovered.

52°F. in blind. I recall Gene Percy told me he had put out meat balls containing a strychnine capsule on his ranch last fall (?) and that he knew of at least one coyote killed by them. There was a chance for condors to get secondary strychnine poisoning. 10:00 a.m. - Hopper mtn. cloud covered but most of canyon still cloud free. Light breeze. I saw 2 turkey vultures soar by about 1/4 mile W. of carcass. 10:40 saw one

turkey vulture pass about 1/4 mile E. of carcass flap-gliding - much flapping as if air poor for soaring. Sky 5/10 cumulo-stratus with base at about 5000 ft. and fair visibility below. At 11:15 three ravens came & pecked at the dried blood on rocks - left 11:25. At 11:40 ~~3:00~~ three ravens again came & one pecked 3± minutes at the eye - gone at 11:50. Breeze light still.

1:10, a raven alighted on carcass & pecked at eye & penis area. A turkey vulture swooped low overhead at 1:15 (raven squawked), turned back when about 1/2 mile to SE of carcass, & alighted atop cliff 50± yds. S. of carcass. Buzzard sunned its back, wings



Gymnogyps californianus

March 11, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

outspread, for  $3\pm$  minutes. Raven remained on the carcass, clicking the bill, wiping sides of bill on horse leg, & pecking at juicy penis region. 1:28, buzzard suddenly flew off & raven flew to buzzard's perch atop bluff. 1:30, I saw a coyote standing about 100 yds. E. of the carcass. 1:33, I saw one buzzard about 20 ft. E. of carcass apparently pecking at something on the rocks. 1:35, coyote gone. 1:45, buzzard gone - had not touched carcass. 1:58, 2 buzzards atop cliff  $100\pm'$  SW of carcass, another soared  $15\pm'$  over carcass, & 2 ravens were within  $10\pm'$  of carcass. 2:02, one buzzard running back  $20\pm'$  W. of horse. 2:04 - the two ravens flew off. Sky  $5/10$  cumulus, cloud bottoms at about 5000' level; light breeze. Intermittent sunshine on carcass. 2:08, buzzard closest to carcass flew off & followed  $30\pm$  sec. later by the other perched buzzard. No apparent disturbance. 2:55, one raven at carcass; 2:59 - gone. 3 p.m., two turkey vultures were perched atop bluff  $100\pm'$  SW of carcass. 3:40, two ravens also perched near the vultures. At 3:45 the vultures left & the ravens soon after. Left blind at 4:10. Sky clear, air cool. Saw no crows. Camped at head of canyon.



Gymnogyps californianus

March 12, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Night calm. at 7:10 a.m. I looked at the horse carcass. Flushed one raven from it. Carcass still entire - apparently no coyote visitations. My main task today is to erect a good blind near top of Big Cave. Have procured an old auto tent from Sid Peyton for this purpose. at 9 a.m. parked at head of tractor trail to Condor Creek. Saw 1 raven feeding on <sup>the</sup> horse carcass. Hiked down road to N. end of cliffs leading to Big Cave & S. along top of cliffs. at 9:10 stopped to observe Arundell Ridge. I saw 2 condors perched on <sup>a limb of</sup> a dead Ps. at cliff top about 100 yds. E. of #11 nest site. One seemed to be making the mating display, walking up & down the branch for 6 $\pm$ ' with wings half spread - possibly sunning however. Saw a 3rd. condor flap glide E. near them and land in a dead Ps. 300 $\pm$  yds. farther E. of the pair ~~at~~ on Arundell ridge. A few minutes later saw one circling over canyon near #11 nest; this one joined another & at 9:45 there were 5 circling over the brush near Condor Falls (rising time? - I was too far away to cause disturbance I believe). Saw a group of 15 $\pm$  turkey vultures over North slope. Sky clear, air warm, light S.W. breeze. At 9:58 the pair near #11 nest gone. Saw two



Gymnogyps californianus

March 13, 1996

Hopper Canyon, Cal. P.

land in the same tree however, one about 2 minutes after the other, & counted 3 sure (5 fairly sure) other condors perched in trees on N. side of Arundell Ridge. 10:02 - about 5 more alighted in trees on Arundell Ridge - 3 on Saddle Ps., & at one time 3 on Flat Ps. 10:04 counted 13, 6 being in air near Arundell Ridge. The oft observed pattern of shifting roost to Arundell Ridge from Big Cave area before going foraging is again apparent. Breeze faint. 10:10, counted 9 on Arundell Ridge, Flat Saddle Ps. & another dead Ps. having 2 each. Maximum number of flaps gliding flaps seen - 9. 10:15, an adult circled over lower North Slope, then glided toward Big Cave area. There is frequent shifting between <sup>perches</sup> ~~roosts~~ - but at least 7 condors in trees on Arundell Ridge. None visible within 300 yds. of #1 nest. Air dead calm at times. Have seen at least 3 airplanes this morning - 1 went W. over the head of Hopper Canyon & 2 N. over Beake Canyon. Low flying planes or the noise of them may disturb the condors. 10:30, at least 5 (possibly 7) still perched on N. slope of Arundell Ridge - no shifts in last 10 minutes. I proceeded to about 3/8 mile N. of Big Cave. At 10:50 I saw 4 circling over Condor Canyon at cliff top level. One was an immature.



1/12

1/12

1/12

1/12

1/12

1/12

1/12

1/12

1/12

1/12

1/12

1/12

1/12

Gymnogypscalifornicus

March 12, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Cal. F.

An adult alighted atop the high rampart 300 $\pm$  yds. N. of Big Cave and 3 $\pm$  minutes later crunched with wings cocked out to sides & took off. I counted 3 still perched on Drundell Ridge. I saw 2 circling and rising over E ridge between Pyramid L & Old Cabin. 10:58, at least one of these headed NW when 100 $\pm$ ' above Old Cabin area. 10:59, two adults circled & worked up North slope, then glided toward Old Cabin. Very light S. breeze. The circling adults passed 150 $\pm$  yds. W. of where I sat in open without apparently noticing me. The close perched adult had ruff flat at base of neck & no crop bulge. 11:01, 1 still circling near Old Cabin. Rising time about 10:50 or earlier today. 11:02, 3 additional over W. of Rim near Old Cabin, 1/4 $\pm$  mile apart. 11:10 - one adult circled near me, rising slowly, and working N. up slope. I timed 3 circles at 11, 15, and 13 seconds (not consecutive). Nearly all circling was to left, occasionally one to right. At 11:30 I arrived atop Big Cave. No condors were perched there. I worked at setting up tent blind about 100 ft. S. of the ~~sub~~ cliff top falls brink - same place I had my 1941 blind - so that I could observe Whitewash Ledge and cliff top near falls. top. Completed the job at 1:20 p.m. At 12:30, while I worked, 5



Gymnogys californianus

March 12, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.



adults circled overhead, some 60±' over, and at least one with feet down. At 1 p.m. a single adult circled overhead near sun (shadow attracted my attention). The pool atop Big Cove was bone dry. Nearest damp sand was 75' back from cliff edge - but no water there. Tracks were numerous up to 30' back from cliff edge, then few. I measured the length of stride & offset of several tracks with following results:  $15\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{3}{4}$ ,  $14\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{3}{4}$ ,  $13\frac{1}{2} \times 1$ ,  $12 \times 2\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $13\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $15\frac{1}{2} \times 3$  (all inches). It is apparent that the condor is a rather straight walker, not a waddler. The toe of her foot often left a dragging mark up to next footprint - at least 12" and very straight. These toe dragging marks were found only in soft dry sand of course. There were patches of grass close to the many condor tracks but no evidence of grass being clipped. However there were numerous tufts of grass which had been pulled up by the roots, & a few small heavily pubescent plants which had also been pulled up. Pieces of down were common in the grass but no large feathers. There were ~~was~~ quite a few condor tracks around some small dry damp potholes in creek bed 100' back from cliff edge, and 3 sets of tracks going to - and returning from - the next damp



Gymnogyps californianus

March 12, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

sand about 130' from cliff edge. Another 100.± ft. back was the first water - it was clear & open but there were no condor tracks apparent <sup>on</sup> in the damp sand. Cliff edge was obscured by brush from this water. Apparently, then, the condors must drink elsewhere than atop Big Cave now. I hiked about 1/4 mile N. on cliffs & sat to watch. 2:10, one turkey vulture circled near top of Big Cave. There was one apparent condor atop Flat Pt. on Arundell Ridge. Light S. breeze, clear sky, 75°. At 3:10 about 2:30 as I ascended a rise an adult soared 100±' over me from opposite direction. It went straight for 1/4± mile, then began to circle & worked back over me as if out of curiosity. The trailing edge of wings & tail was ragged. The #7 primary of one wing was short 6±"; the #5 of other wing missing. In flight, feet are held together with toes locked ~~together~~  Toes apparently very close together. At 3:20 I reached my car which was parked in sight of the horse carcass and about 1500 yds. SE of carcass. I saw one adult condor perched atop ~~the~~ <sup>a</sup> rock point about 100 yds. S. of the carcass. The bird held its wings up briefly , and seemed once to do a "wind howl", and took off about 3:25 and headed S. down the canyon. Perhaps I disturbed the bird in getting in the car.



Gymnogyps californianus

March 12, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

At about 3:25 two condors circled over the W. Rim about a mile SW of carcass. At 3:35, two (same?) circled together about a mile S. of and 500±' above the carcass. 3:45 - the 2 now S. 17 turkey vultures were over Rim west of carcass, apparently working southward. One condor circled below them - about between rim and carcass. 3:50, the group of 5 dispersed, but 3 scattered 500±' over or ¼± mile S. of the carcass. 3:55, 2 of the 3 headed toward Condor Cliff area. 3:59, the third too headed SE at higher altitude. None came closer to carcass than about 300 ft. above it. 4:05, 3 condors were circling and rising together <sup>the divide at</sup> over head of Hopper Canyon. One headed S. when altitude about 800 ft. & other two continued circling. About 8 turkey vultures milled in a separate group about a mile from the condors. An occasional vulture passed near the condors but there seemed no tendency to join them. 4:10 - no condors in sight. I walked a short way down tractor trail. Saw 2 in Roost Tree at 4:30 (same 4:45 - 1 on tip top, one flattened on top branch) and at least 2 on Arundell Ridge (1 on Saddle Pt., 1 atop green tree near Flat Pt.). Returned to camp. Visited the horse carcass. Found no evidence of condors, turkey vultures, or coyotes having fed upon it.





Gymnogyps californianus

March 19, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Drove up Pale Canyon & arrived at Pyramid Lookout on Hopper Rim at 2:45. Sky clear, faint SW breeze, <sup>56°F.</sup> 66°F. There was light snow in a few protected spots on the road near Hopper Mtn., some on the ridge W. of Caliche Stone Mtn., & much in the ~~Fraser~~ <sup>Tschadapi</sup> ~~mountain~~ <sup>area</sup> in the distance. Branches & leaves in the road evidenced that the severe wind of last night reached the Hopper Mtn. level. I searched the usual perch points with telescope & found one condor crashed flat in a pathole in sunshine above Big Cave. No birds were evident in the area of the horse carcass (<sup>carcass</sup> not visible from Pyramid Lookout). 3 p.m., I saw one condor near Whiteacre Pk. apparently gliding toward the Agua Blanca. 3:03, the bird over Big Cave standing in <sup>some</sup> pathole, back to sun (I conjecture that this bird probably an immature). This bird same at 3:15. Water visible at Condor Falls, the first falls below Big Cave. The sand atop Big Cave appears wet from the storm of yesterday - perhaps there is now water there available to condors. 3:48 - two more condors above Big Cave (3 total) on Whitewash ledge. 3:50, the pathole one & another off - soaring close to Condor Cliff, & 30 sec. later the third



1. 1. 1.

2. 2. 2.

3. 3. 3.

4. 4. 4.

5. 5. 5.

Gymnogyys alifornicus

March 19, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

also in air - all <sup>3</sup> adults. 3:51, two adults circling near Big Cave, feet down, one about 100 yds. behind the other. One alighted on a sheltered point 200± yds. W. of Big Cave and  $\frac{2}{3}$  way to top. 3:56, the 2 off, one after the other. They soared together, fallow-the-leader style until 4 p.m. when they alighted on a point of the cliff S± of Roast Tree. The trailing adult had feet down constantly. No flapping but an occasional wing "dip". The fallower <sup>briefly</sup> ~~briefly~~ chased a third adult, both birds flapping at times or diving together in front of Big Cave. At 4 p.m. three adults (besides the 2) circling over Big Cave, very low (shadows on rocks). At 4:03 I saw one circling over Parking Knoll. This bird rose to 800± ft, then glided toward Big Cave area. 4:07 - three perched at in top of Roast Tree, one on Whitewash ledge, & the one in air approaching (at least 5 total). 4:09 - two adults over Big Cave, one chasing the other, often banking steeply, both birds flapping (6 total). 4:11 - one ~~ship~~ two were together on Whitewash ledge; one (adult) took off & landed in pothole over Big Cave. 4:08,



Gymnogyps californianus

March 14, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

there were 2 in this 4±' ~~off~~ large pothole - one left  
& other 30± sec. later. The north <sup>most</sup> pothole below  
Whitewash Ridge now occupied by an adult. 4:16,  
two one a ledge above Big Cave - one apparently  
had difficulty with footing & flapped 13 times  
before dropping off the cliff. One alighted atop  
the cliff but was chased off by a flying adult  
2± minutes later (both adults). Adults chase  
adults & imm., but never have I seen an  
immature chase an adult. Have not seen the  
roast trees NW of Big Meadow being used this  
year - perhaps they offer poor protection from  
the cold. 4:22, I saw 2 (at least 1 adult) some  
low over the rim NE of Pyramid Lookout. Breeze  
light from SW as before, 45°F. 4:27, an adult,  
feet down, soared from foot of East Canyon to -  
ward <sup>3</sup> nest area as if to land near there.  
4:30,  
~~4~~ a lone immature circled close to brush &  
bluffs at S. side of mouth of East Canyon.  
4:33 - a lone adult near head of SE canyon  
over the rim; 2± minutes later it met 2 other  
adults & soared with one of them, the other  
following 100' above. 8 visible at Big  
Cave area - so 11 total at 4:35. 4:37,  
2 adults & 1 imm. (?) near brink of falls  
atop Big Cave. One adult made motions as if



Gymnogyps californianus

March 14, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

drinking. Three other condors walked toward the pool area from cliff tops N. of falls brink. 4:39, none visible on Roost Tree or Whitewash ledge, but one in pothole <sup>below</sup> near the ledge & at least 3 atop cliff over Big Cave near falls (dry probably).

4:42, a lone adult descended, feet down, near Rock Ridge & alighted on top branch of a dead Ps. in the shade about 100 yds. NW of Rock Ridge, saw in the canyon. Saw this adult shake head violently 3+ times. The tree was whitened as if used before for roosting - others were in sunshine still 100+ yds. up the slope. 4:48, at least 5 visible at Big Cave area; one atop cliff, none in Roost Tree; frequent shifting still. I left Pyramid L.O. & drove to Old Cabin. Saw 7 at Big Cave at 5:05 but could spot none on Arundell Ridge. Saw 1 late-comer descending northward over Arundell Ridge. Continued on to head of Hopper Canyon & visited the horse carcass - it was somewhat deflated but still unopened. Saw one coyote leaving carcass. Camped at head of Hopper Canyon.

March 15, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Clear cool night. I left car at head of tractor trail to Condor Creek & hiked down cliff








Gymnogyps californianus

March 15, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Cal. F.


tops toward Big Cave to watch from blind there.  
 at 9:15 stopped about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile N. of Big Cave to  
 watch. <sup>Saw 1 adult stop off slope working nest.</sup> Saw 2 circling near #11 nest. Saw 4 perched  
 in separate trees on N. slope of Drundell Ridge -  
 at 9:25 only 1 perched adult still visible there  
 & about 5 in air nearby. 9:25, an adult slight-  
 ed atop the high rampart  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile N. of Big Cave.  
 I had a good view with telescope - red crop patch  
 was conspicuous. About 9:27 two adults  
 alighted within a few feet of the one. One walked  
 $10 \pm'$  up the rock with wings  as if  
 to balance. One displayed, walking around  
 facing another. The displayer held wings  
 and head , tail dragging on the  
 rock. The displayer backed away several times  
 & displayer had to walk around the adult. One  
 adult twice put its head under the tail of  
 displayer from the rear & right side & appar-  
 ently plucked at the feathers in anal region.  
 The displayer pecked at another adult & the  
 second flew off, the displayer reaching the  
 neck out at it with bill wide open.  
 Then displayer took off & chased the other  
 adult - they swooped up flapping in front  
 of Big Cave & the chased one turned in the  
 air so as to bring feet up toward the



Gymnogyps californianus

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

March 15, 1946

chaser at end of one swoop , then fell off into glide & chase resumed. Retrogressing - an imm. also alighted atop cliff with the 2 adults - all took off when the two left. Displayer showed both red crop patch & red patch at base of neck ventrally (this slightly bulged it appeared). I saw 7 sandors circling together & rising 500± ft. <sup>over</sup> ~~at~~ Condon Cliff at 9:35 - some chasing was still going on then. Air cool with light S. breeze; sky clear. 9:42, a group of 5 circling & rising together over head of Pyramid Lookout. One headed SW from 500±' above Condon Cliff. One adult perched atop F lat. Ps. still. 9:45 - no perched birds visible. 9:48, one rising over head of Pyramid Canyon - breeze SE, up this canyon. a group of 3 near Old Cabin, working northward above Rim. it's "Rising time" about 9:40 today. 9:51 - 5 ("") circling over Old Cabin <sup>area</sup> ~~and~~ & a sixth circling & working up the slope over Spring Canyon Meadow. Two crows flew within about 50 yds. of me around 9:30 this morning - I was in open sitting atop a rock. They came at separate times & didn't seem much interested. The display was the closest (about 200 yds.) & took place when I was less concealed, than any I recall witnessing before. 9:56, 3 loitering over Old Cabin - two 3 heading S. above Rim (100±' above) near Pyramid Look-



Gymnogyps californianus

March 15, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

out. A seventh circling over E. slope of Hopper Mtn. top.

10:01 - saw 2 over Hopper Mtn., 2 over Pyramid Lookout, &amp;

2 (1000±' high) over Old Cabin. 11:03 - the Pyramid 20 pair

heading toward Hopper Mtn. - 5 total scattered from Hopper

Mtn. to Parking Place, apparently searching rather than

making a B-line for known food supply. Fresh SE

breeze. 10:06, two adults without crop bulge circled

&amp; rose 100± yds. W. of me. One had notch in center

of secondaries of both wings - and other a missing

#4 left primary. The ruff seems always to be in

same condition in flight - that is up to the head.

The long neck does not show . 10:11,

the pair now 500±' directly above me, circling

at same level &amp; 30± yds. apart maximum. 3 still

over the Flat Mumps area of South Ridge. 10:13, the above

pair gone. I headed for Big Cave again. <sup>Saw 2 over E. Rim SE of Big Cave.</sup> An immature

left Big Cave area &amp; soared down Condor Canyon - wings

curved — —, tail tilted much. Then 2 adults

left that area &amp; circled below Big Cave for 5± min.

utes - one had #4 left primary missing. At 10:30

I was at the pool area atop Big Cave. There were

many new tracks to about 30' back from cliff

edge, then few. First water was a pool in sand

about 85' back from falls brink. Only 2 or 3

condor tracks led to it - more birds may have app-

roached over rock however, but told still very

1 min + 9 left pr.  
2 ad - 10:30 - roof 75' 2 ft. - 5 min 4 min

20 x 2 3/4

16 x 1

7" sent to conf.

under 4 1/2 - 3/4.

10:40 - 10d in cr

2 min - 145?

✓ clear. Down. Reverse. 10d. 10d.

11 - ad x in off.

11:05 - 11:10 - 11:10

11:10 - in off. 11:10 - 11:10

2 over. Cr. bridge. No land

11:10 - 11:10

Gymnogyps californianus

March 15, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Cal. F.

small. The water was somewhat riled as if from birds bathing or wading. There were no <sup>new</sup> condor tracks further up the creek. 5 condors soared near the Big Cave area at this time - perhaps on account of me. Measured some condor poeces 20" long  $\times$   $2\frac{3}{4}$ " offset, 16"  $\times$  1". The length of one track from center of front claw to center of hind one - 7" average of several with little variation. Widths averaged  $4\frac{1}{2}$ " (claw center to claw center). Some were  $4\frac{3}{4}$ " & one  $5\frac{3}{4}$ ". At 10:40 I peered over the cliff top & saw one adult standing on Whitewash Ledge. About 10:50 I again looked over the edge - an imm. was swimming back about 20' above adult & another imm. standing  $20\pm'$  below. Both immatures had the white tips of greater secondary coverts forming a distinct line. Lower one had down just above tarsi for  $1\pm$ ". Both had back of neck & head feathered. Apparently both perfectly fledged - no large feathers missing or battered. Birds of 1945? Perhaps. I took a photo of the ledge & birds from about 200' away - they seemed concerned about me but did not fly. At about 11:00 the adult took off with a sudden jump.






Gymnogyps californianus

March 15, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

and the lower imm. also took off as if frightened from the perch. When imm. was perched, it gave at least 2 "yawns" which disclosed brownish yellow inside mouth. This imm. & adult circled over Condor Knoll, the imm. above the adult. Then they returned over me. The imm. soared especially close to me several times while adult only came within 50 ft. once. Adult had small crop bulge tho it seemed not when perched. None of these 3 had bands. About 11:05 the other immature took off & circled very close over me, feet down a large part of the time & sometimes flex gliding. I took a photo of this bird in flight. These immatures showed a brownish black triangle in the under wing patches - another sign of youth? The tail of one was quite square cut rather than a smooth arc  - a peculiarity which I noted in J. L. Murray's condor painting. 11:10, I started to erect my tent blind 100±' SW of falls brink. The last imm. to take off alighted atop cliff over Whitewash Ledge. At about 11:20 I was settled in blind. the imm. took off & in company with another soared over me close, again & again, for



Gymnogyps californianus

March 15, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.


about 5 minutes. The flight made a rushing rather than a singing sound. Both seemed to have a bulging button in the crop area & a few light (down?) feathers protruding from sternum behind this bulge. All quiet by about 11:25. No condors at Big Cave area by 12:30. Retrogressing - the imm. which circled over me with feet down at one point raised the right leg & scratched  $3 \pm$  times at head or neck, all quite slowly. <sup>about</sup> At 2:45 p.m. an imm. alighted on Whitewash ledge & an adult  $2 \pm$  minutes later. The imm. was a fuzzy headed one with <sup>bare</sup> crop patch bulging, & appeared like the one I saw perched at about same spot around 11 a.m. today. The adult was  $20 \pm'$  above imm.. Adult preened. Pecked at a short feather between its feet until feather fell off cliff. There was a fair E. wind flapping my tent blind constantly. Adult had a rosy color on sides of neck from ear down - distinct contrast from orange of the rastrum. Hind neck did not show the rosy hue. Back of neck was dull grayish orange. Between the rosy sides & magenta ventral neck spot was a light grey area. This adult seemed to have crosswise crease <sup>or wrinkles</sup> lines on back of head & neck & a wart (?) left of center on hind neck. There were scattered black feathers in crown



Gymnogyps californianus

March 15, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.


area of  
~~2:42~~ adult as if bird were somewhat immature. A few between eye & ear & on hind neck too; it appeared. Adult wiped side of head on back & then held bill open for 2<sup>+</sup> seconds. Most brilliant orange is between frontal feathers & bill (top & sides of rostrum). 3:12, adult again wiped side of head on back quickly & followed this by holding bill open 2<sup>+</sup> sec. 3:20, both preening. Imm. feathered with short dark gray down on back of head & neck. Ventral cervical apterium is grayish - about same color as legs. Down at tops of tarsi. Brownish orange color in mouth. 3:25, the imm. sunned back, holding wings out for over 4 minutes, then slowly bringing them in. Primaries pointed forward & down during sunning  - the crop bulge was conspicuous. Lining of wing largely white with brownish triangular area. Imm. preened ruff & wing edge while sunning. 3:42, ~~I noticed adult~~ The adult put wings up once in regaining balance - there was small dark area in the white lining - a "near-adult". 3:40 I noticed adult & imm. looking down canyon. At 3:42 another fuzzy headed immature landed on highest perch of whitewash ledge. No light colored stripe at tips of greater secondary coverts was evident on this bird; back & sides of neck had short dark down. The newcomer busily preened, nibbling under scapulars



Gymnogyps californianus

March 15, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

and tail. The near adult had the light wing stripe. 3:51,  
another fuzzy headed imm. alighted - this one atop  
cliff over Whitewash Ledge. Birds appeared   
~~now~~ apparently none of these birds had soared near  
~~my~~ blind before they landed - I detected them  
abruptly on the cliff. Fair wind still. Sky clear.  
Air cool - 53° in blind. It seems that immatures  
are last to leave & first to return to roost - how  
do they get enough to eat? Perhaps fed by ad-  
ults - but I have never seen this in spring! 4:08,  
no change. Top imm. does not have bulging bare  
crop patch. Ruff up to ears on top imm.. Down at  
tips of tarsi & white light wing chevron on this bird too.  
4:10, top imm. walked 15±' down rock, wings up, until  
over the near adult (#2). 4:12, a 4th fourth imm..  
landed clear of the others on the ledge. This one  
had red eye, pink ventrally on neck but dark  
head with feathers on hind neck & head. Wing  
lining was brown brownish white rather ~~uniform~~<sup>uniformly</sup>  
rather than some white & some brown feathers.  
This bird summed back for 1± minute a few  
seconds after landing (#5). Birds numbered  
in order of arrival. 4:13, #4 flapped toward  
falls brink & took 22 flaps but apparently  
stalled before reaching a perch & soared back  
to alight on lower Whitewash Ledge. at 4:19



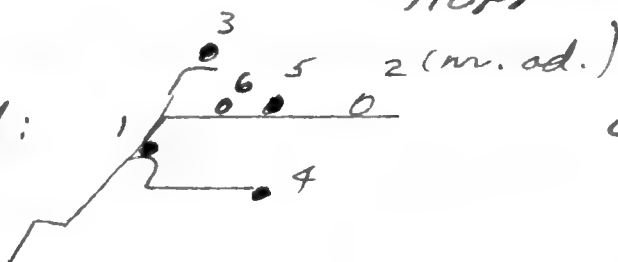


Gymnogyps californianus

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

March 15, 1946

the birds appeared:



an older

yst imm. perched next to #5 - this one with orange  
 cheeks + pink neck but sooty around eyes +  
 base of crown. 4:21 - several landed; 10 total  
 visible. 4:25 - 14 visible, 8 definitely immi-  
 stures (not counting #5). Some adults are rosy  
 around ears + sides of neck - others not -  
 a sexual characteristic? Saw one display briefly  
 atop cliff. An imm. landed 20±' N. of dry pool  
 atop falls but left. 4:40± - 15 total; at least 7 dark  
 heads. 4:45 - three adults atop cliff over Big Cove.  
 One was a near-adult - a little sooty. One adult  
 displayed in usual fashion, ~~to~~ back of neck toward  
 displayee, tail not spread but dragging stiffly  
 on the rocks. The displayee was the near adult.  
 It nibbled at wing lining and crop + sternum of  
 displayer. Displayer put one foot on top of head of  
 other 3± times. The third adult was in the way of  
 the 2 much of the time; it left + display continued.  
 Displayer had no noticeable pink on sides of  
 neck but red spot at base dorsally was very  
 bright + crop + sternum bulged (even after dis-  
 play). The walking motion was mainly  
 a side to side rocking on the feet. Displayer  
 left + displayer 1± minute later. Displayer



Gymnogyps californianus

March 13, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

landed next to an old immature (very sooty head) and 2± times put a foot on top of its head before it flew. 5 p.m. Frequent perch shifting. Looked for banded birds - no luck. One slighted next to another on ledge - feathers flew & there was a sound like a snarling dog - inhaling & exhaling as a few feathers flew & one bird flew off. Perhaps <sup>birds</sup> ~~feathers~~ scratching on rock? A few seconds later there was a light cough sound as another left perch. My bird apparently good - some slighted within 100 ft. at 5:06, 1 imm. & 2 adults near falls brink. 13 condors in view. One adult returned back 2± minutes about 4:45. 5:08, adult & imm. atop of cliff near falls - both standing calmly. Adult off about 5:09 & imm. 5:10 - both to other perches on cliff. Stopping flaps in landing seem to be about 3/second ~~times~~ - some for shifting perch - this is result of 3 timings. Have heard up to 11 flaps given before landing. 5:15 - 6 condors in about 5' diam. circle atop cliff over Big Cove. Dark head visible head of an adult there. Adult visible head of sooty headed one. Later adult put head under neck of this one & seemed to throw it over backward - there was a grant or of expelled air as this occurred. The sooty headed one have unfeathered area be-



Gymnogyps californianus

March 15, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

low & behind the mandible - rest of head sooty tho color shows through somewhat & pink sides of neck evident. 5:22, 6 near dry pool at falls, 3 in shade. Fuzzy headed imm. somewhat alone in the group. It nibbled sand. It nibbled green grass & tossed it from its beak several times. One adult ~~per~~ stalked another as if going to display. It put head under the other ones anal region - the other gave a jump & lost a pinch of down plus a 4" feather which remained in the first ones beak. 5:25 much shifting of perches still at 5:30 - 10 atop cliff & 4 (3 imm.) on Whitewash ledge. ~~One~~ One imm. crouched flat on the ledge. Saw one sooty head peck twice at another (each time a hiss was heard). A third then pecked at the pecker; pecker took off followed by the third, & then the first pecked & took off after them. 5:35 - sunset line crossed top of cliff above Big Cave. One or more in flight almost constantly heard or seen. One sooty head landed on at a perch where another just landed & first took off. 5:38, heard a grunt sound like a suppressed belch - I do believe the birds make hisses, grunts, & growls occasionally. Air calm since about 4:30 p.m. 5:40 - only 6 in sight now - 3 on Whitewash ledge & 2 atop



Gymnogyps californianus

March 15, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif

cliff and one in pothole. I cannot see Roost Tree or potholes on N. face of Cardo Cliff from blind - the rest may be there. None has seemed to be alarmed by the blind. Adult has ruff seen - 52°F, no wind. 5:43, only 1 imm. on Whitewash Ledge now - 3 in potholes over Big Cave, one on shelf there, & 1 adult atop cliff 300± yds. N. of Big Cave. 5:48, the ~~shelf~~ shelf one off & one (same?) into small pothole over Big Cave which contained another adult. 5:55, the imm. shifted from the open ledge to shelf over Big Cave (somewhat protected). The 3 potholes over Big Cave each contain at least 1 adult. One young adult still atop cliff 300± yds. N. of Big Cave. 5:57, a second fuzzy head was perched below Whitewash Ledge. It flew to shelf by other imm., then about 1 minute later to Whitewash Ledge. at 6 p.m.; 4 orange heads & 2 fuzzy heads visible at least in part, none seemingly crunched flat for the night. Two rovers roared vociferously near Big Cave - imm. seemed mildly interested. 6:02, a ~~3rd~~ third fuzzy head alighted in hole below Whitewash Ledge (unoccupied). 6:03 - the orange head left cliff top, <sup>one adult</sup> alighted low on Whitewash Ledge, & by jumps & flaps worked 20±' up the ledge. The 5. pothole over Big Cave became

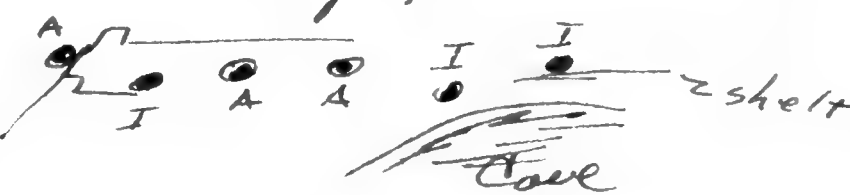




Gymnogyys californianus

March 15, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

vacant - lowest immature flapped up to it & in. at 6:05:  6 at Big Cove area.

6:08, with 17 flaps, one entered this pathole & the imm. left. Adult gone from Whitewash Ledge so probably same (peck order?). 6:10, the lone imm. on Whitewash Ledge now crouched flat on ledge facing cliff. 6:12 - heard one <sup>flap</sup> move off - apparently the last one to alight in pathole. All 3 patholes filled at 6:15 (by adults) and 2 imm. on open ledges. Air calm.

6:25 - saw a second on lower Whitewash Ledge. The imm. previously there shifted to the shelf over top of Big Cave. Poorwill's heard - first this year. 6:45 p.m. - by moonlight mainly saw 2 still on Whitewash Ledge & 1 on shelf over Big Cave.

Same at 11 p.m. At 6:30 F. Woon Telford Work, Al Wool, & Harold Helt Hill arrived. Work stayed in blind with me & <sup>Wool</sup> Wool & Hill camped up the canyon from Big Cave. They had been at horse carcasses to about 4 p.m. but no carcasses had come. They met Frank Arundel on way up Pale Canyon & Frank told them of his carbor collecting experiences in the old days very willingly. Work will take movies at Big Cave tomorrow while Hill & Wool will explore East <sup>Canyon</sup>.



Gymnogyps californianus

March 16, 1976

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

At 6:30 a.m. of this cold clear day saw one adult crunched flat on Whitewash Ledge & one imm. on shelf over Big Cave. Latter had head tucked in. Adult tucked head in later, then out again after a few minutes. Ruff way up, monk style. 6:40, imm. had head out & preened occasionally. Trails Rear 1/4 of adults were visible protruding from 2 of the potholes over Big Cave (none seen from southernmost one). So - at least 2 condors spent all night on open ledges of near Big Cave & at least 2 in potholes there. The roosting position was with head tucked in & at 11pm last eve it could be seen that 2 on Whitewash Ledge were crunched flat, 6± feet apart, & the imm. over Big Cave seemed to be standing but with head tucked in (moonlight night). One by one the condors left Big Cave & flew down Condor Canyon - all gone by 6:55 tho sunshine on Whitewash Ledge & atop cliff over Big Cave. By 7:15, <sup>(1 imm.)</sup> 4 condors in sunshine at lower Whitewash Ledge. They probably come from Lost Tree or potholes on N. face of Condor Cliff. Adult ~~seen~~ at 7:22, 2 adults sunned backs on lower Whitewash Ledge. Work shot some pictures of this. After 3± minutes one folded one wing (toward cliff, tip in shade) & continued sunning. Both stopped sunning by



Gymnogyps californianus

March 16, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

7:27. 7:31 there was a group of 3 adults which had been together 10± minutes. Suddenly one lunged at a second, the second took off, & the lunger followed 30± sec. later - a fuzzy headed immature alighted in its place. Imm. summed back. 7:33, another dark headed imm. alighted 5±' below the summer. Adult 30±'ft. higher on the Whitewash Ledge took off down the canyon. The imm. summed almost continuously for about 6 minutes. Lower imm. took off at 7:49 leaving adult & imm. 8±' apart on a shelf below Whitewash Ledge (only 2 visible). Clear sky. Fair wind by 7:50. 7:54, a second fuzzy headed imm. joined the 2 condors on same ledge shelf. 7:58 an adult alighted atop cliff over Whitewash Ledge (2 imm. & 2 adults now visible). 8:10 - the 3 group preened. One imm. had poor wing stripe & fairly uniform brownish white under wing patches; also light colored at base of neck. Preened with wing sagging at side. Adult atop cliff had ruff way up to 40°F in blind. About 8:25 adult atop cliff left & 1 imm. from below. Other imm. was in shadow as adult summed back for 4± minutes (only left wing out last minute). The imm. left & adult 2± min. later at 8:32.



Gymnogyps californianus

March 16, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

8:45, an adult & imm. alighted on Whitewash Ledge about 8' apart. Imm. shifted to cliff top near falls brink but seemed disturbed (by camera movement?) and flew back to ledge. Work shot pictures of adult. Scrutiny with telescope revealed this adult had a band <sup>(?)</sup> on right leg - Work identified it as the eagle band they placed on nesting adult last year. <sup>I was not sure.</sup> It appeared very tight & halfway up the tarsus - well whitened, not shiny. At 9:24 this adult took off. Made a "wind bow" down canyon about 1 minute before finally raising wings & taking off (Work photoed this). This adult had bulging crop - imm. did not. 9:45, still only 1 imm. left as before. Fair wind continued. We left blind & took some pictures of points around Big Cave but saw no condors - fair E. wind at 10:25 we left Big Cave - the imm. was still on ledge (1945 youngster I judged). We hiked to cars at head of tractor trail (arrived 11:15). Saw 3 ravens at horse carcass - no condors. Work told him me that Dan MacLean skinned them on a map the place on Pine Creek where he said he once found a half grown youngster. He marked a spot about 4 miles from Ridge Route. The group went on 9 miles down before getting





Gymnogyps californianus

March 16, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

to the described place & found nothing. The place was in a pothole about 200 ft. above river bottom. We returned to Big Cave. Saw one close adult about 12:45 & young imm. about 1 p.m. We entered blind at 1:35 - light E. breeze, sky clear, 70°F. By 4 p.m. no condors had landed at Big Cave area. Light breeze - much less than yesterday at this time. 4:40 p.m. - condors heard soaring near; 2 seen circling in front of Big Cave. An adult landed in pothole over N. side of Big Cave. Adult off down canyon at 4:50. Although not obviously disturbed, the condors may have been so disturbed by the blind & people yesterday, last night, & today that they do not feel safe roosting at Big Cave tonight. Left blind about 5:20 & hiked N. along cliff tops. Saw one condor perched flat on Flat Ps. & possibly one other on Arundell Ridge by search with telescope. Perhaps the condors are not roosting in Hopper Basin tonight. Returned to camp at head of Hopper Canyon.

March 17, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Fairly warm moonlight night overcast with cirrus clouds. T. Work & I, drove to Parking Place.

At 7 a.m. saw 1 condor atop Flat Ps. on Arundell Ridge, 1 in a dead Ps. in Parking Canyon on lesser side of Parking Place. (300± yds. down



Gymnogyps californianus

March 17, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

from road, & 2 in separate dead Ps. near foot of Water Tank trail near Rock Ridge. We picked a spot in Big Meadow for building a blind from which to photo & watch condor bait. At ~~8~~ about 9 a.m. all the <sup>4</sup> birds as before. We drove to Pete Legan's, then back on rim. At 10 a.m. saw that bird in Parking Canyon & on Arundell Ridge were gone. None visible in Big Cove area. At 10:05 saw one gliding ~~SE~~ S. about 300' above rim near Old Cabin. Arrived at camp at head of canyon about 10:25. Air calm & hazy up to then - a light breeze commenced. Worked at camp, then hiked to top of Big Cove - seeing no condors on the way - and entered blind at 12:30 with T. Work. By 4:30 p.m. no condors were seen or heard in Big Cove area. 60°F. in blind, light breeze. Left blind at 5 p.m. - no condors in sight. Met Al Wool & Harold Hill. They had been down East Canyon, then down Hopper Canyon and up Water Tank Canyon, then back to foot of East Canyon (where camped), then up Hopper Creek to past #11 nest and #1 nest to head of Hopper Canyon. They saw a condor near #11 nest, 2 or 3 others perched in trees on Arundell Ridge, and one in a pathole near North Point which acted as if it had an egg in the hole. They



Gymnogyps californianus

March 17, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

watched this bird from about a half mile - it held head low as if pecking at flat & went back in cave several times, each time apparently settling down with a shimmying motion as if on an egg. [nest 12]  
No eating of the week old ~~bird~~ carcass yet.

March 18, 1946.

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Calm cold night (frost). at 8 a.m. fog up lower Hopper Canyon at about 3500 ft. level.


We left camp at about 9 a.m. & went to Parking Place. Fog came up the canyon & engulfed us & We built a blind of sheet metal under some bushes in Big Meadow. Fog gradually lifted above the Rim. At 11:45 one condor soared over us heading S±. Breeze was light, air cool. We saw 3 then perched atop Arundell Ridge on Saddle Ps. One flew to high Ps. near Flat Ps. At 12:15 we saw 6 circling over Arundell Ridge, rising, & none perched. They worked up the slope to near Pyramid L O & headed S±. We saw 7 at about 12:25 from Parking Place. Two were adults, one a near adult, & 4 immatures. They circled close (100±') over us soaring slowly. 3± birds had missing <sup>4<sup>th</sup></sup> or <sup>5<sup>th</sup></sup> primary. One imm. had feet down. Ceiling was about 200' overhead. The two adults came together - one chased the other briefly. The adults & 1 imm. glided N E toward the Reservoir & 3 others



2956  
Gymnogyps californianus

March 18, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

E. into Hopper Canyon. Breeze was fair from S. Sun breaking thru ~~dark~~ cumulo-status clouds occasionally. At 1:10 saw one adult perched on limb of the dead Ps. nearest <sup>road</sup> ~~road~~ just W. of Parking Knoll. We walked down the road toward the bird. It put head & bill down near feet, ruff up. As we passed behind the bird, it turned around slowly. Scratched head with right foot. We took a few photos for about 3 minutes from about 75' from the adult, then the bird turned around & took off down the canyon. We then went to Old Cabin and down to Spring Canyon Mdw. to observe the hole where Hill & Wool saw a condor yesterday. This hole was about 2' high &  shaped located about halfway up a 60±' high sheer W. facing cliff about 100 yds. N. of North Point (about 40' below highest top of bluff there). This cave is easily watchable from Spring Canyon Mdw. ~~There~~ There was a dark spot in the cave which may have been a condor on an egg (2:10 p.m.) At 2:10 saw three condors flying about the trees on Arundell Ridge. 2:38, we whistled & shouted & the adult in #12 nest came to cave entrance. The bird stood facing down canyon, then up, & at about 2:44 walked back into the hole & again hole appeared as sketched above. 2:45, saw 3 condors over Arundell Ridge. Cumulo-status clouds





Gymnogyps californianus

March 18, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

at about rim level & hazy below. Fair S.E. breeze.

Hill said that in 1940 a group stayed in Hopper Canyon for two weeks. One man looked for a condor nest near Drundell Cliffs for some time & finally saw a condor enter the work nest. One member of this party wrote an article about the trip for an eastern magazine but did not mention the egg collector. The egg was taken about March 17, 1940 Hill recalls. Frank Drundell told them the other day that he took one egg about 1/4 mile below Big Cave. Because of threatening weather we returned to camp at head of Hopper Canyon. We visited the horse carcass - still unbroken hide & much stunk with hair falling off. At 1:30 the cloud base lifted to about 4300 ft. level & we saw two condors circling over Big Meadow in the very clear air. Weather closed in again & we went to Pete Logan's in Pale Canyon for the night.

March 19, 1946

Nr. Whiteacre Rk., Calif.

Went to Whiteacre Rk. & back to head of Hopper Canyon in fog & drizzle & light snow. Saw no condors.

March 20, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Snow & fog all day at head of Hopper Canyon and on Hopper Rim - snow 3" deep on level. Sky broke somewhat about 4 p.m. but probably too late for condors to search for food.



Gymnogyps californianus

March 21, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif

Hiked from head of Hopper Canyon to North Point and down slope to Cave Point arriving 10:25 a.m. with Al Wool. At 9:00 we were  $\frac{1}{4} \pm$  mile N. of North Point & saw one adult (with #5 primary missing from each wing, a near center rectrix missing, & a notch in inner left secondaries) circling over the ridge at NE of North Point. This bird passed 300' above us then glided to vicinity of #1 nest camp, circled 5  $\pm$  times, then glided N. over the rim <sup>into</sup> toward Agua Blanca watershed, never pausing although passing nearly over the old horse carcass. Maybe this was a #12 nest adult. There was a cloud layer with bottom at about 4000' level - it had risen up the canyon from a foglike lower layer. We could spot no perched condors from Cave Point but saw one ~~see~~ circle & rise from vicinity of #11 nest at about 10:30 - this bird rose over Arundell ridge into cloud bases. It had #5 left primary missing - no other apparent feather gaps. At 10:50 this adult spiraled down & alighted on top limb of a dead Po. about 300 yds. W. of #11 nest cave. The bird preened there & at 11:04 took off, circled & rose over Arundell ridge to 300  $\pm$  ft. altitude, then glided <sup>in</sup> toward Big Cave direction (11:11). A red-tailed hawk soared above Arundell ridge but no interaction with the



Gymnogyps californianus

March 21, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

canyon. We had entered the cave at Cave Point at about 10:40 to observe #11 nest vicinity.  $40^{\circ}\text{F.}$ , fair breeze from SE, cloud bases at about 8000 ft. (cumulus stratus). Many snow patches on rocks & ground from yesterday's storm. 11:26 an adult landed in same dead Ps. again & took off about 1 minute later & soared E. down canyon passing 80±' above #11 nest - perhaps our original approach flushed the incubating adult which is now trying to reenter the nest but is disturbed by us. Our location was in a cave about 1/4 mile NW of #11 nest.

At 11:43 the adult returned & perched atop Flat Ps.... saw this bird excrete in air while flying - left a long string of blobs in air. About 11:46 shifted to a green Ps. 300± yds. W. of #11 nest & at 11:47 to the first tall dead Ps. Before the 11:46 perching the adult soared 100±' above our cave. We stayed well back in cave but were visible from the perch ~~tree~~ on Drunkell Ridge. The adult jumped up to a 4±' higher perch about 2 minutes after landing. In 3 landings on this tree the adult has used 3 different perches. Present perch is 12±' from top of 60±' tall dead Ps. on a 12±" stub branch. Branch will not support outer toe of left foot apparently as too short - bird is squeezed against trunk & facing <sup>out</sup> away from cliff (toward us). Ruff up to ears. Adult once flopped wings several times as if to



Gymnogyps californianus

March 21, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

regain balance. We had a small warming fire in the cave - visible to perched adult doubtless. No crop apterium visible in perched bird tho possibly some bulge. Still perched at 12:30 - one adult stretched left wing down & back. We left Cave Point about 12:40 to avoid keeping adult from nest. At 12:50 we saw 6 condors total - one as above, one atop Roost Tree (this tried to alight in pathole  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile N. of Big Cave & gave 13 flaps trying to get a foothold, then dropped off & flew to tree) & 4 circling above Big Cave. We went up Condor Creek & visited <sup>Hill's</sup> Waka's nest (arrived 1:40). Apparently no condor visitation since my last visit. Fog descended & engaged us at Condor Cliff about 1:45. We returned to camp at head of Hopper Canyon - fog the rest of the day there.

March 22, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Clear frosty night. Drove & hiked to Pyramid Lookout arriving 8:30 a.m. (with Al Wool). Sky clear, haze in valleys, fog N. of Libre - Cobblestone mtn. line. At 8:35 saw one adult circling over Arundell Ridge. It worked over Spring Canyon Mdw., flap circling, taking 15 flaps consecutively once. & Timed 7 flaps in 3 seconds once. This bird worked up over Old Cabin (about 8:45) & then headed straight.





Gymnogyps californianus

March 22, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

toward the Despe in a long flex glide. about 1 mile W. of Rim it put feet halfway down, circled back, then continued on toward the falls at Oil Well Pt. on the Big Despe, occasionally giving a wing dip. When last seen at 8:51 it was near the cliffs  $\frac{1}{4} \pm$  mile S. of the falls - not improbably a nesting adult; early rising time & no company do not indicate foraging. May be going to the nest - I found there in 1940.

At 8:40 I saw 4 condors at Big Cove area about  $\frac{1}{3}$  way up the cliff, perched on ledges & occasionally shifting. 9:13, occasional light breezes, 50°F. I saw 2 adults circling near Condor Knoll (below Big Cove) & 2 condors perched on Whitewash Ledge. 9:15, three atop cliff above Whitewash Ledge & 2 on ledge & 1 on Saddle Ps. - 6 total (+1 to Despe & one each on #11 & #12 nests = 9). 9:25 - four (2 ad; 2 imm.) circling over lower Condor Canyon; <sup>one</sup> ~~two~~ on Whitewash Ledge, 1 sunning (for  $4\frac{1}{2}$  minutes continuously, sunning back, wings out) on Saddle Ps.

9:30  
~~9:30~~ one gone from Saddle Ps. 9:35, one adult atop Flat Ps.; sunned back for 2 minutes. Five circling near Condor Knoll, none visible near Big Cove. 9:40, adult left Flat Ps. - none visible perched anywhere. 9:45 - one adult was ~~about~~ at about 4500 ft. level over Spring Canyon Mdw. after having worked

11:55 Lt. off 6TV  
57 mlt  
8 - 100 yds 41  
9 - off

Gymnogyps californianus

March 22, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

up from <sup>over</sup> ~~near~~ Sandstone Mesa. 9:48, 5 visible over Rim at head of Hopper Canyon - 2 left near Whiteacre Pk. at 9:53. One of the 5 peeled off & descended into the Pine drainage in direction of Whitaker Pk.

9:55 - 3 condors circling  $500 \pm'$  above Whiteacre Pk. ~~Sub~~ Occasional light breeze;  $50^{\circ}\text{F}$ . 10:00 - 3 over Whiteacre Pk. still, circling aimlessly. Followed one about 2 miles E., another 2 miles W. of the peak. At 10:10 picked up one N. of White Point coming up from below Rim level. It circled & rose, soared halfway to North Point, circled working back over the horse carcass, then glided W. over the Rim at Small Mdw. Pass at  $50 \pm'$  altitude. 10:23, 2 condors circling at  $300 \pm'$  over Rim NE of North Slope. <sup>flex</sup> 54°. The two glided into Hopper Canyon & descended, feet down, toward Brundell Ridge, at least one disappearing behind the ridge as if to sight about 10:28. 10:45, saw one circling over Old Cabin, apparently having come from N. It rose to  $1000 \pm'$  & then headed N. again. 10:55, there were 2 turkey vultures flying & perching above #12 nest. A condor adult alighted on cliff edge above the nest (10:55). At 10:57 it took off & alighted  $100 \pm'$  to N. &  $50 \pm'$  lower down on a small point, flushing a turkey vulture from the spot. 10:58 the condor took off & perched



Gymnogyps californianus

March 22, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

about 150 yds. N. of #12 nest on a rock point. At 59 the condor took off, soared past the nest, & circled & rose above North Ridge & over the Rim near White Cliffs. Perhaps this was one of the nesting pair, driving the buzzards from the spot. I have often seen 1 or 2 turkey vultures at this area this season - perhaps the condors have their nest hole. Saw another condor circling beyond the Rim (NE) at about 11:05. By 12:00 saw no more condors. We worked at getting our cars out of the mud & returned to Pyramid Lookout at about 2:25. At 2:30 I saw an adult soaring 100±' above Rock Ridge & watched it until 2:44 when it swooped behind Arundell Ridge as if to land there. During the flight the bird descended over Rock Ridge & landed on a ledge halfway up the cliff, then took off 15± sec. later, circled over East & Southeast Canyons (foot) and over foot of North Slope. Several (3±) times it put feet down for a few seconds, then raised them. Occasionally it gave a wing dip. Sometimes it circled & gained altitude & at other times flex-glided & lost altitude. At 2:35 it joined another adult & circled with it for 2± minutes. At 2:43 saw one imm. circle & rise to W. of the lookout & <sup>there</sup> high above it.



Gymnogyps californianus

March 22, 1996

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Breeze light to fair from SW, temp. 58°F. at 2:57 two circled & rose over the Rim from W. near the lookout. 3:27 saw one adult, very stuffed (~~bird~~) over Old Cabin - this bird descended in a steady flex glide toward the Sulphur Pk. area (or at Well Pt.?) too hazy to follow over a mile W. of Rim. 3:35, 8 condors seen approaching Old Cabin area from NW. 3:50-3 scattered over E. Rim at about 4500 ft. level; still none visible perched. 4:08, one imm. spiraled down & landed in next highest dead Ps. in ~~Top~~ Parking Place. This was dark head with dark triangles in wing lining patches. Summed front, wings out, for 1± minute. 4:19 - I saw one adult spiral down, lower flat, & swoop to land on a top <sup>cliff</sup> branch of a dead Ps. near center of face of Rock Ridge. This one gone at 4:25, younger as before. At 4:30 left the lookout. Saw none in Parking Canyon. Drove to Old Cabin & at 5 p.m. saw 3 at Big Cave (1 atop Roast Tree, two on ledge). Drove on to road opposite #12 nest (about 1 mile). at 5:15 whistled & shouted and the adult ~~so~~ rose slowly & stood in entrance facing down canyon with wings cocked  $\overline{\text{E}}\text{Z}$ . The entrance was so small that the bird filled it & seemed to be down on its heels to fit in. There was a supporting ledge below the hole of only a few inches it appeared. The tail of the bird





Gymnogyps californianus

March 22, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

had been visible from our position. D. after 2½ minutes the bird folded wings & stood with back to us & sun. Adult slipped & regained footing with several flaps. It spread wings & sunned back for about 1 minute, the wings being outside the nest cave. At 5:17 the bird entered cave & slowly & sat about as before after hesitating with head down (a look back, or rolling egg). We continued on to camp at head of Hopper Canyon.

March 23, 1946

Nr. Fillmore, Ventura Co., Calif.

Cool clear calm night, some frost. With al Abol drove from head of Hopper Canyon to Fillmore. At 7 a.m. saw at least 2 condors at Whitewash Ridge (one about 15' above oak tops), none in Pale Canyon. Arrived Fillmore about 9 a.m. Drove to gate on Big Bespe road & hiked to Oil Well Point - departing <sup>by 1 p.m.</sup> 10:35 & arriving 12:30. Saw no action around old nest site opposite (toward Sulphur Pk.) the point though whitewash was fresh appearing on several rock points & ledges in that area. Hiked through the brush & rock up the slope toward the old nest. At 14:10 we saw an adult & immature (fuzzy head, perhaps a 1945 youngster) standing together on a rock about 100 yards from us. We drove into the brush & came up about 50 yards from them. - they remained.



Gymnogyps californianus

March 23, 1946

Big Seep Canyon, Calif.

We again approached & at 2:23 saw they were in air. The immature had dark patch in center of wing lining patches & a light white line on wing - no color visible on head tho yellow-brown in mouth. Imm. had slit in right side of tail (N) and #2 right primary missing. The two passed 100±' over us heading S±, then back over us. The imm. was obviously a poorer flier than the adult & did much about tail tilting, a good deal of the time imm. followed 100±' behind adult as if following the leader. Imm. had a protruding button on sternum - to rear of usual crop bulge in adults; fuzzy down above tarsi too. We searched for the old nest. At 3 p.m. the same two again soared over us within about 50 ft., several times. Imm. had feet down occasionally. At 3:11 the adult & imm. perched upon an outjutting rock point about 1/4 mile toward Sulphur Pt. from the old nest - there was a great deal of wing flapping & it appeared that the imm. was begging for food (possibly fed). Another adult circled near - perhaps we flushed this one from a nest. I entered the old nest cavity & found no evidence of use since my last visit. I found but 2 bones (ungulate hoof & rabbit sized femur)



Gymnogyps californianus

March 23, 1946

Big Seep Canyon, Calif.

and a 1" squarish rounded brown piece of glass (a piece of beer bottle?). The only whitewash appeared ~~some~~ quite old & a few old feathers were about. The green bushes at mouth of this cavity were not worn or whitened. A rock point & ledge about 100 ft. out (on ridge) from the nest were heavily whitewashed, & 2 points about 100 yds. up canyon (to E.) were also well & freshly whitened. The whitening may have been caused by an imm. raised last year or by adults perched near a nest. I feel that there is another nest site near this cave. While I was in cave the adult flew very close to it with feet down, alighted on a rock point 100±' N. of cave, & craned its neck as if peering in at me. About 3/8 mile toward Sulphur Pt. from this cave is an autocropping with several whitened spots. & 1/2± mile further on a dead Ps. with some whitened limbs. It is probable that the adult I saw head for this locality yesterday about 8:30 a.m. was one of the adults present today. At 3:35 we left the nest area & proceeded down to the river near Oil Well Pt. Left the Point at 4:30 & hiked toward Fillmore. At 5 p.m. we saw two adult condors perched 10±' apart on two very



Gymnogyps californianus

March 23, 1946

Big Seese Canyon, Calif.

much whitewashed points on next to top ledge of the high, <sup>red</sup> sandstone bluffs to E. of Seese River about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile below Tar Creek & <sup>about 600</sup> 500 to 700 ft. above creek bed. As we watched one took off & rounded the top corner of the bluff  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile downstream (could not spot it later from further downstream). The other then took off, circled, & again alighted at same point. The whitewash there appears old & yellowed - because of protected nature of the points the ~~white~~ excrement remains. We continued on to our car at Van Tree's gate (arrived 6:35). Sid Peyton told me he had seen a young condor fed in about May, at about the same place we saw the adults at 5 p.m. but 100 $\pm$  ft. lower on the cliff. The adult had flown in & perched & the imm. followed, then was fed. Sid saw the feeding another time too. Met game warden Shebley on the road - he hauled me down with siren & red light thinking I was a fish poacher. He said that when he put carcasses out on the ridge S. of Fillmore about 5 years ago he got as <sup>many</sup> many as 26 condors there & got pictures of them with an 8 mm. camera. He said the condors ate bob cats but not the coyotes he put out. He lives





Gymnogyps californianus

March 23, 1946 Big Sespe Canyon, Calif.  
on 4th or 5th St. in Fillmore now + would be  
glad to talk condors some evening. Warden Green-  
wald lives at Bengalow Run + may also have  
some info.. Shebley seemed intelligent + young  
(about 38±).

March 25, 1946 Santa Paula Canyon, Calif.

Drove from Fillmore to Santa Paula Canyon  
with Sidney Peyton Jr. Parked about 1 mile be-  
low Pine Flat Camp. Hiked to the old condor nest  
(Herbener 1939) + descended cliff + entered nest at  
12:00. Saw no condors up to then. Day clear +  
warm: fair east wind blowing. The point at  
cave entrance + 2 or 3 others 100± yds. further  
up the canyon were well whitened - fresh  
whitewash it appeared. Inside the nest cave I  
collected about 10 bone fragments, teeth, + shell  
fragments (clam like), + about 50 ticks from  
crevices in the rock ceiling (same as collected in 1939).  
At 12:30 left the cave. The bees were still quite  
active in the<sup>a</sup> hole in the rocks near cave entrance.  
I saw 2 adults about 500 ft. overhead at 12:30.  
Sidney told me they had soared about for 5± min-  
utes to within about 200 ft. of nest cave.  
I estimated that no chick had been raised in  
that cave since 1939. Saw no evidence of collect-  
ors having visited the site. Saw 2 old raven nests

5/10/1944  
Brown loc.  
Xp. int.  
Good source  
T. sp. 1944

1900

Gymnogyps californianus

March 25, 1946

Ojai, Calif.

across the canyon top ( $\frac{200 \pm 1}{200 \pm 1}$ ) from the old nest. Returned to car & drove to Ojai where talked with Ranger Lyda. He said the new supervisor Mr. Brenneis, was very interested in wildlife & had mentioned to Lyda the fact that the Audubon people wanted to make Hopper Canyon a condor sanctuary. Lyda was of the opinion that the general condition of the trails in this district was quite poor - many impassable to horses. Lyda said the oil company that had the drilling permit for Hopper Canyon had apparently folded up - they did not even answer their mail. Sid Peyton said the condors in Santa Paula Canyon had nested about 100 yds. further up the canyon from the nest I looked in and about 8 ft. down from cliff tops at (once?).

March 26, 1946

Santa Paula Canyon, Calif.

Drove from Fillmore to end of Pine Canyon road. Left car at 9:10, & with Sidney Peyton Jr. hiked up Pine Canyon toward Santa Paula Lookout. At 11:30 crossed saddle near the lookout & hiked toward Cienega Camp. Up to this time saw no condors though air very clear. Calm until about 10:30 a.m. Saw some whitewash near old Peyton nest (nest in bent). In head of Santa Paula Canyon in the red sandstone cliffs saw fresh appearing whitewash at one point where I had seen it several years



*Gymnogyps californianus*

March 26, 1946

Santa Paula Canyon, Calif.

ago. At 12:10 we had finished lunch & were starting back toward Pine Canyon. I saw one imm. fl. gliding fast down Santa Paula Canyon from near head (of E. Fork) then & two adults circling over the brushy slopes. All three circled & rose above horizon and worked back toward Bear Heaven or Coldwater Canyon in a scattered (2+ miles) group. The red cliffs at head of E. fork appear very favorable for condor roasts or nests. Headed back toward Pine Canyon & arrived at Pine - Lords Canyon divide at 1:20. Took the ~~ex~~ Coldwater trail through head of Pine Canyon until 1:45. This trail is very poor & impassable to horses. Returned to the divide (2:00 p.m.) & hiked to end of Pine Canyon road (3 p.m.) and drove to Fillmore. Saw no condors in Pine Canyon nor evidence of roosting in trees. The rock point above the old Dayton Rest on N. side of canyon appears to be the most likely condor perch. Mr. Appleton of Simi told me the following story when we were on way to C.O.C. meeting in L.A. About "45 years ago" Appleton shot a condor near Simi. The bullet struck a second in the head & wounded it. The killed bird was sent to a female taxidermist in the east. Years later he visited her & she told him she still had the skin, un-



Gymnogyps californianus

March 26, 1946

Fillmore, Calif.

mounted. She gave him the specimen back & Appleton sent it to George Willett for the L.A. Museum. The wounded bird was kept for a week, and although apparently healthy would not eat squirrels or other food offered it. Then it was released & flew away. (Condors can go for a week without eating, it appears).

April 1, 1946

Santa Barbara, Calif.

Conferred with Supervisor Brenneis at F.S. Headquarters. He has been on this forest since March 1. He seemed very interested in condors & wildlife. In 1928-29, he said, he saw condors many times in the Agua Caliente - Diablo area (?-where is that?). I told him of the proposition to close the Hopper Mtn. road & he was cagey about giving any answers or discussion on that subject. He said he believed Mr. Craven Miller would be down in this area - perhaps not until June - & they would then like to view the Hopper Mtn. country. Until then, I gathered, Brenneis was not in favor of taking any action. Visited then the Santa Barbara Museum & talked with C. Z. Rett, Waldo Abbott, & director Coggeshall. Rett was anxious to get some condor photos this year. He gave me a photo



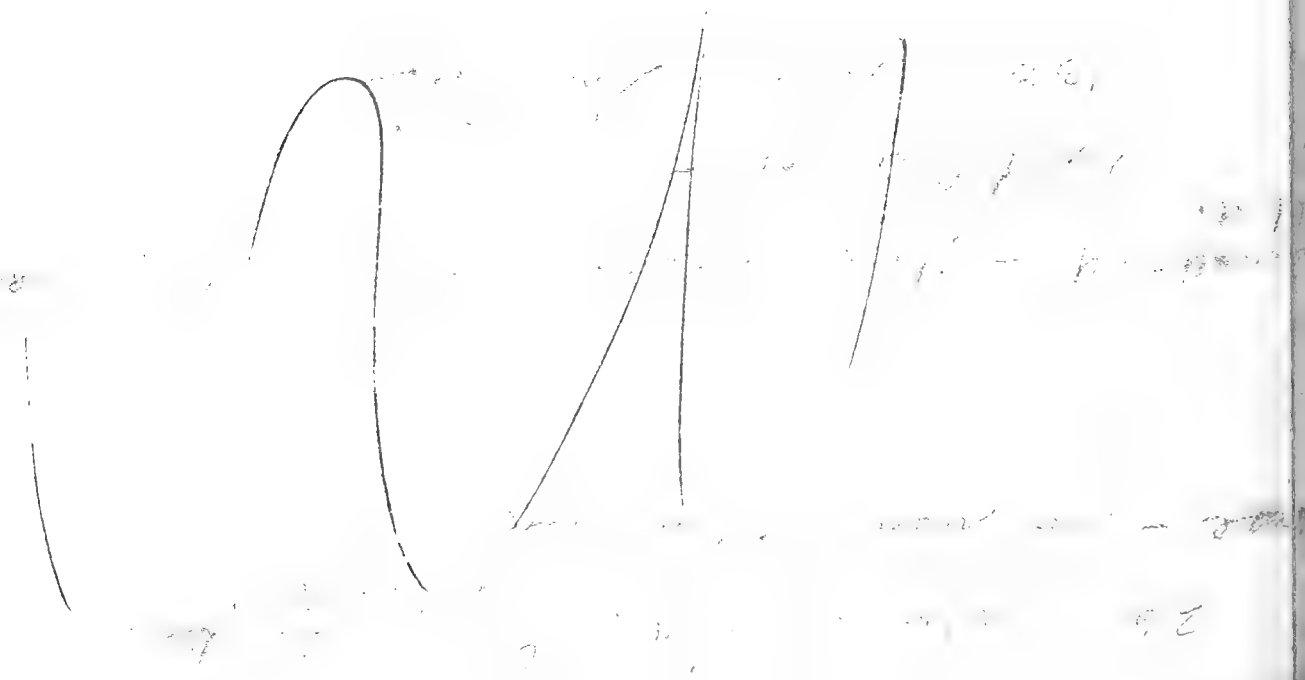
~~94. 3 with  
25 yds. - 2. 20 in. for  
8. 5~~

Gymnogyps californianus

April 1, 1946

Santa Barbara, Calif.

of the dissected leg bones of the condor found dead by Carl T. Wisselman last year & a photo of the bird as collected. The bird had been dead about 3 weeks when collected (died about May 1, 1945) Rett said as <sup>the body</sup> it had been seen on previous occasions. Wingspread was 8'5". Rett said that about 25 years ago when he came to this area he was told there were about 20 condors in the mountains back of Santa Barbara - of course few people went back there at that time. Visited Mary Erickson at S.B. College. The trip made by an ornithology class to Upper Rim (July 1941) was not too successful as some of the cars got stalled. Not over 2 condors at once were seen from the Rim though <sup>students from</sup> one car stalled in Pale Canyon reported seeing 4 circling. She believed Sid Peyton must have told her how to get to a condor observing spot & where to get a key to the gate (Mrs. ~~Amelia~~ Philip's probably). Spent an hour or so in the evening talking with Henry Shelby & Willard Greenwood, game wardens, about condors & wildlife. Shelby said he had taken all the carcasses of <sup>mammals</sup> ~~game~~ he trapped for almost a year to Torrey Ridge south of Pismo for condor food. He killed a cow there once & condors fed on it - also sheep. Baited carcasses



Gymnogyps californianus

April 1, 1946

Fillmore, Calif.

were much preferred to coyote, Shihley said. He said that normally even buzzards would not eat coyote carcasses. His impression was that the condors liked carcasses a little smelly rather than fresh. At one time in late spring he said he saw 26 over his scrap pile - mostly in the air - and took pictures of them with an 8 mm. movie camera. He gave the film away with the camera & projector when he sold it, he said. Once a horse was put out for bait & Baurland hid in a blind nearby - the condors paid no apparent attention to the bait. Greenwald said that he saw 19 condors over Liebre Mtn. in 19(?) & that deer hunters were shooting at them. He said he saw one in a tree in San Luis Canyon near Fallbrook & Pala in 1938 (San Diego Co.). Neither warden professed to know much of condors. Both are about 35 years old & fairly intelligent. Shihley said that he was impressed with the condor's keen eyesight as shown by the fact that often when he was at the foot of the grade looking up at Tovey Ridge he saw no condors up there, yet by the time he got to the ridge top there would be from 2 to 30-26 birds. He had seen not over 6 or 8 on the ground, feeding, at one time, he said.



Gymnogyps californianus

April 1, 1946 Fillmore, Calif.

Sometimes condors would feed when he was only a couple of hundred feet away in his pickup, Shelby said. Greenwald had also seen condors in the Big Pine Mtn. area. He thought the birds were no longer in the Condor Sanctuary (Falls Canyon) area. Neither Shelby nor Greenwald had heard of anyone, <sup>ever</sup> being arrested for shooting a condor or taking an egg. Greenwald thought Sid Peyton had a condor egg taken long ago - he had seen Sid's eggs but not a condor egg however. Shelby said that over Torrey Ridge became a favorite place for army fliers to practice, & he believed this activity caused the birds to leave the area. He & Greenwald both said they had seen condors at Oak Mtn. Lookout (at E. end of Oak Ridge).

April 2, 1946

Ventura Co., Calif.

Sky 4/10 cumulus; warm spring day. I drove southward from Fillmore through Manpark and Newton sales. The rolling grassy country was largely planted & but few cattle were seen. I drove thru Calabasas & down <sup>Old</sup> Tapanga Canyon to visit W. Lee Chambers on Robinson Road. He gave me his egg list & condor letters regarding eggs for my use. About the Santa Monica Mtns. he said that two years ago about April 1, he and his wife saw 2 near Tapia Ranch. These

2011-12-15  
11/15/11

11/15/11

11/15/11

11/15/11

Gymnogyps californianus

April 2, 1976

Topanga, Calif.

birds, he said, stayed about for several days. Mr. Appleton of Simi also saw condors in this region not long ago, Chambers said. The earliest egg record (April 1859), <sup>as</sup> recorded in the Lhis, was of an egg from Santa Monica Mtns. The locality, Tularcitas, is near the junction of highway 101 with Ventura-LA County line. This spot was the collector's headquarters. WLC has a letter in his files regarding this egg. Another egg was taken from Encinal Canyon or the next one E. of it near Lachusa Point near the coast in S. Ventura Co.. a little girl collected this one it is said. Chambers believes condors have left Santa Monica Mtns. area because the food is gone (me too - also too "civilized"). The birds here are just visitors from the "Pine" country. Chambers had not heard of Tmesdale's dislike of the Cooper Club because Chambers pronounced 2 eggs taken by Tmesdale as phony (because of lack of rough texture, WLC said - there was much egg faking going on at that time too). These eggs were purchased by T. Hager & then sent to WLC - the latter still believes they were not condor eggs. Chambers said these eggs were now at Harvard (white in color). WLC said he would take me to the





Gymnogyps californianus

April 2, 1946

Topanga, Calif.

falls where condors used to bathe when I visited him when roads were better. Chambers said that Harvey Anderson of the county forestry dept. was keeping track of the condor reports from lookouts & others in the Santa Monica Mtns. I drove then to Encinitas to visit Ed Harrison. Ed says that Sid Peyton has told him he has a condor egg and has been offered \$750 for it by Tufts of Canada. Steven's (Lory) egg was really obtained from an old collector in Monte-sito for \$25 Ed said, & Ed had offered him ~~\$50~~ \$50 for it on the spot. The National Geographic has a condor article written by A. A. Allen but no pictures for it. Pemberton has told Ed not to let them use any of his pictures for illustration. Ed wants to have some of his kalechromes printed in the N. G. or elsewhere & is worried about someone else beating him in this field. He has a poor opinion of Dan Bledy & believes he is only interested in bird pictures because of the commercial angles. Ed has been to the old condor nest near the aqueduct that Jim Dixon knew of. Permission to go on the property must be secured from Dixon & Ed believes he can find the spot if Dixon will not go with me. Griffing Bancroft can be found at the Cuyamaca

Covering

Volin Can - F. River - 1928

Adapt. Ph. - Summer 1945. 1. - Corona X5

Warner H5 - highest - 70

Palmer - good 60

May 15, 1945. 200'

Gymnogyps californianus

April 2, 1946

Encinitas, Calif.

Club in San Diego after 10 a.m. any day, Ed said - he is deaf but not impossible to talk to by any means. An Andean Condor had been successfully hatched at San Diego zoo last year, Ed said. The birds laid an egg every other year. Belle Benchley could give me the information he believed.

April 3, 1946

San Diego, Calif.

At San Diego Court House talked with Mr. Ewing who is in charge of wildlife on the Cleveland Forest. Mr. Fisher is supervisor. Showed Ewing & others some condor photos. He said he had seen one condor near Santiago Pk. last summer, circling overhead. In 1928 or thereabouts in the Pima area, especially at the head of Valmi Canon & Canton (?) Canyon on E. side of the Pima he said he saw condors many times & sometimes on the ground. Condor reports are sent to San Francisco, he believed. I promised to send some prints for lookout instruction purposes. He believed he thought that Palmer Mtn. lookout or the one near Warner Hot Springs might also be good watching spots. The forest would probably be closed in part this summer. Some lookouts - including Santiago Pk. - would be manned by May 15. Corona was ranger station for Santiago Pk. area & I could



Gymnogyps californianus

April 3, 1946

San Diego, Calif.

get permission there to enter the forest when it was closed. Coving seemed very interested & considerate. I did not meet the supervisor. Went then to the zoo in Balboa Park to see the South American condors. Arrived at the cage at 11:25. Label read "South American Condors. (*Vultur gryphus*). Largest of the vultures. Wingspread 9 to 11 feet. Only male condors have canals. The young male hatched here, June 1942<sup>(?)</sup>. Only condor ever raised in a zoo." The birds were in a flying cage about 100 ft. long. Both adults <sup>were</sup> perched on highest artificial rock point at upper end of cage & the immature was perched flat on its breast 15 ± ft. lower. The imm. was faded brown in color with black secondaries (adults' white on ~~upper~~ surface). Comb was already well developed on immature. I saw an adult take off several times, fly the length of the cage & land halfway back, then climb the rocks to the high perch again. The flapping was definitely more rapid than that of *Gymnogyps* & the climbing of rocks much more sure. *Vultur* walked with the spring of a boxer & at a good speed (frequently nearly running) compared to *Gymnogyps* and was much more adept at climbing rocks without striking its wings on the rock or slipping. With each exertion of springing up a rock step the adult (♀) gave a low peaglike grunt (heard many times



100

100

Gymnogyps californianus

April 3, 1946

San Diego (Zoo), Calif.

but only with the spring). This grunt was audible 60+ feet away. I saw the imm. peck at heads of both adults on several occasions & wrestle heads with them ~~occasionally~~ violently (more violent than Gymnogyps). The imm. forced ♀ adult backward from the ledge upon one occasion. Imm. climbed rocks well but had a generally soft look to plumage. Adults frequently held bills open for several seconds as if to pant or yawn (a cool day <sup>but or breathing fast from exertion</sup> ~~so probably not panting~~). Imm. too opened bill wide several times before taking off on a short flight. Iris of adult ♂, imm. & ♂ adult brown. A second time I saw imm. force the ♀ from perch - no later retaliation. At 11:58 the ♂ took off after long pausing with wings outspread. It & imm. also grunted when springing up the rocks. These birds seem to flap much more stiffly than Gymnogyps - nearly 5 flaps per second I timed. About 3 or 4 landing flaps are taken by these birds. Saw ♂ drive ♀ adult from highest ledge once. In perching the curve of the neck <sup>was</sup> ~~seemed~~ quite distinct from the "crop" bulge - ~~the~~ I did not see these birds puff their cheeks as Gymnogyps often does. Head appears to be less elongated than Gymnogyps and broader, & neck somewhat





Gymnogyps californianus

April 3, 1946

San Diego (zoo), Calif.

thicker. Sometimes the ventral cervical apterium was visible as a continuous bare area from neck to "crop" area. Crop patch nearly white in these birds. The imm. was evidently the poorest flier of the 3 <sup>frequently</sup> struck branches of the Eucalyptus growing in the cage when landing. The ♀ adult made many circuits of the cage as described but ♂ & imm. flew down to the lower perches & pool edge without soaring around the corner as the ♀ adult did. Back & <sup>black</sup> upper wing covert feathers were much blacker in adults of Vultur than in Gymnogyps. Tails were spread wide when landing. Head color of imm. dark like Gymnogyps though down neck <sup>more</sup> fuzzy brownish & lighter gray. Size of imm. similar to Gymnogyps though head shape different - bill, especially the lower mandible, <sup>quite pronounced</sup> longer than G. & "double chin" <sup>more pronounced</sup>. Neck seemed to be longer than G. but this appearance may be due to lack of the hackle <sup>-like</sup> ruff. Preening similar to G. I saw one adult scrape the side of its head on the rock as if to scratch. Adult ♂ drank, wading into 4±" of water & lifting each head up after each dip as if to look about. V. seems broader across the back than G. - perhaps because they

~~Cat - parent  
Feed min.  
Age adults - root eggs.~~

Gymnops californianus

April 3, 1946

San Diego (200), Cal. F.

habitually carry the wings a little out from the body. The loose skin <sup>at the skin</sup> ~~at below~~ the is of course much greater than in G., hanging down <sup>2-4</sup> ~~2-3~~ inches and flapping around with each head movement. Imm. did not have this. One reason for the ~~SA~~ success of V. over G. is that V. is a better flier in tight places & better at scrambling up the rocks (judging from zoo birds). Bill gaping - probably used for yawning, helch (?), panting, & apparently often preliminary to takeoff. ♂ was pink above the furry white ruff & had a V of skin about 1" long on neck in line with ruff on dorsal surface. By I watched until 10. m., then visited Mrs. Belle Benckley, director of the zoo. She said that the Andean Condors had laid an egg in 1942 and 1945. Both times the egg was broken by the birds & a second laid & hatched. The nest was a cavity in the large flying cage on level ground. These caves were built of rough cement blocks & this one contained a log. The entrance was hidden from view of persons outside the cage. The first egg hatched on July 8, 1946 1942, 5257 days after it was found by Carl Koch, the bird

Egg in tree.  
 2 eggs laid. 1st laid - dark brown.  
 '42 & '45

3 July hatched - 57 days - 1942 - to nest box -

to spring - alky to have male - not seen feed by mother  
 by father - at later stage requiring more after mother  
 requiring in ground & sun. - reduced up & ate. Bath  
 out of cave last Nov a  
 1st Dec. Bath inside. about over. No molting molting  
 white upon hatching

7 weeks - all down - head down, larger and  
 out (6 months) some  
 Jan 7 - out (6 months) some  
 later. Down above & around neck. Skin to  
 Col. Can.

egg white & large down egg are

down present near of when hatching.  
 7 + 9 large stuff. 9 seen to 7 when large.  
 Face & neck get red. Head down like brown milk.  
 wings

(Photo 85 Dipolus 3605 7th Dec, 5D.)  
 McKenney Photo - 7 weeks imm.  
 Van Post Photo - Jan 7, 1943 - 6 months old.

1929 - father same - from Hagenbach box - just getting  
 white. (about 2 1/2 mo young, white up)  
 1934, 9 - about 1 1/2.

Gymnogyps californianus

April 3, 1946

San Diego (200), Calif.

keeper. The following spring the youngster adjusted violently to the "love making" of the adults. <sup>It</sup> ~~It~~ was sent to the National Zoo at their request in summer. No egg was laid in '43. Both adults incubated the egg, taking turns quite fairly. The father was seen to feed the youngster often but the mother seldom or never. Feeding was by regurgitation. When youngster was fairly large the adults would regurgitate the food on the ground & the imm. would eat it. Both adults did this regurgitating. The chick came out of the cave the last of Nov. or first part of Dec. There was no nesting material - the egg was laid on the ground litter. One photo by Mc Kenney (former photographer) showed the youngster at 7 weeks. At that time it was all dark down. Picture showed bird with head down & tongue out like Gymnogyps. Chick was down on its heels & was said to have grunted (Stott & Kerkpatrick said they never heard the ~~the~~ young bird make a sound). Another photo by Norman Van Pelt (1034 8th St. San Diego) showed the youngster out of the nest on January 7, 1943. The ~~bird~~ bird was downy on legs & breast



Gymnogyps californianus

April 3, 1946

San Diego Zoo, Calif.

then & appeared much like a young E. The egg was white & about the size of a large goose egg Mrs. Benchley said. Another photo by G E Kirkpatrick showed the imm. pecking at the back of adult when latter had wings out displaying. Both ♂ & ♀ strut & hold wings out & head bent down but ♂ most. ♂ gets red in head & neck at this time. Kirkpatrick & Stott said the ♂ makes a ~~fast~~ fast pup - ~~pub~~ <sup>pup</sup> - pup sound at the same time & drags tail on the ground. When ♂ starts to display, ♀ comes to him quickly & responds. Wings in photo are out about  $\frac{1}{3}$ , tips not back as often in E.. Head is down "like a bass violin" Benchley said. About the adults: father came from Hagenbeck Zoo (Berlin) in 1929. It was just getting white on the back then so was probably 2 or 3 years old. Ruff was white & feathers not fuzzy. In 1934 the ♀ was obtained from Ecuador - it was about 1½ years old then Mrs. Benchley judged. The birds are fed horse meat & occasionally a rabbit or guinea pig - about 3 lbs. <sup>for the cinders</sup> as near as the keeper could judge tho of course other birds & cats in the cage clean it up too. When hatched the imm. was sooty



St. John's Bay  
at 10 am - 10:30

30 yrs - Santa Mary - pan

1 young shot at

1 at Santa Mary's

1 after Santa Mary - about 10 yrs ago

15 yrs

Gymnogypscalifornianus

April 3, 1946

San Diego (Zoo), Calif.

colored & had the male comb. The head was feathered from the start, Benchley said. The Calif. Condor which the zoo once had was very playful - a regular pet. It died from eating a strip from a rubber hose the keeper left in the cage. Mrs. Benchley said that in 1911 she & her husband saw several condors between Pine & Fillmore. Met Ken Stott & G.E. Kirkpatrick, the museum photographers (about 26 years old I judged). Stott said he saw 2 condors in Baldy Canyon near Claremont in 1939, the same year that 2 were reported from the Idyllwild <sup>(sp.?)</sup> country near Hemet. They said that the birds condors puffed out their breasts during display but no did not puff the chaks or necks. The noise of a movie camera caused them to stop displaying. The condors were quite vicious & attacked the photographers. Kirkpatrick said that when he was outside of the cage with 79 school children the ♀ had flown at him & struck the side of the cage. Stott was bitten in the leg by one. In the display the birds waddled from side to side, walked back & forth, & occasionally turned around, they said. The second egg hatched on to about 13 June (found 16



Gymnogyps californianus

April 3, 1946

San Diego, Calif.

June 1945). The youngster was out of the cave well before Christmas Mr. Benchley said. The condors pay no attention to the house cats, caracaras, red tailed hawks, or other animals in the cage I observed. Visited Mr. Griffing Bancroft at the Cuyamaca Club (Union Bldg.) where he was playing cards & asked him about condors in Lower California. He said that in the last 20 years he had heard of but 3 - 1 at Hanson's Lagoon, an imm. shot <sup>about 15 years ago</sup> at ~~near~~ Hanson's Lagoon; & 1 atop Sierra Juarez (about 10 years ago). His wife had <sup>not</sup> told him of ~~seeing~~ seeing any though she had done much work in Lower Calif. I asked him about condors in San Diego County - the last he had heard of, he said, was <sup>one</sup> about 30 years ago on Santa Margarita Ranch seen by his son. He ~~aff~~ affirmed that he was not trying to put me off but that the above were the only records he had of condors recently.

Reference from Ed Harrison's library: "A study of the Incubation Periods of Birds" by W H Bergtold.

The Kendrick - Bellamy Co., Denver, Colorado. 1917.

p. 21, <sup>of box of Calif. Vulture.</sup> wt., 320 oz. *avisidupois* avg.. Authority

"Bull. N. Y. Zool. Soc., Jan., 1909, p. 466."

p. 33, wt. of egg of Calif. Vulture (estimated, <sup>by</sup> W. H. B.)



Gymnogyps californianus

April 3, 1946

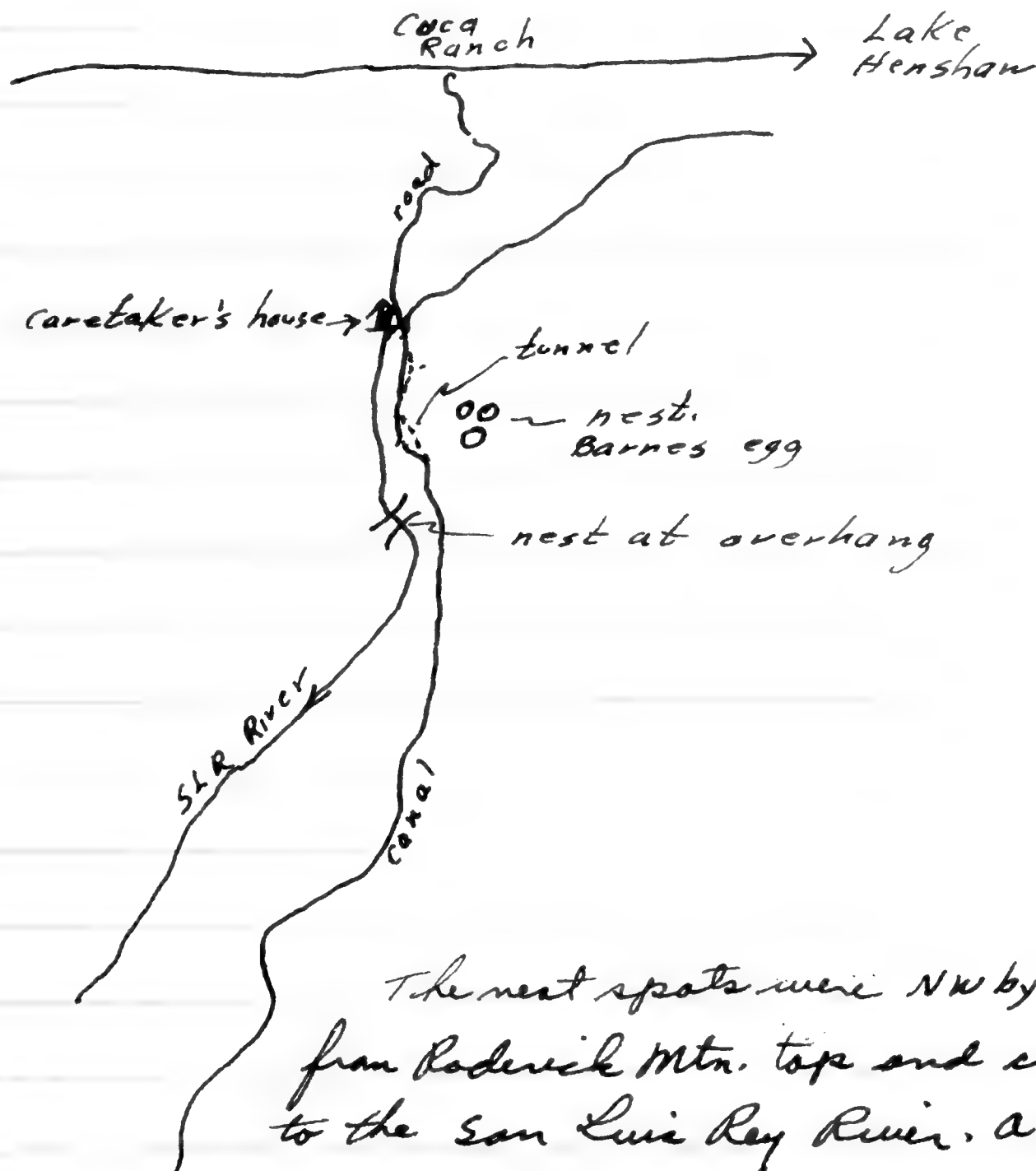
Encinitas, Calif.

10.90 oz., authority "Knowlton, Birds of the World, 1909." p. 7783, incubation period, 29 to 31 days, authority "Evans - Ibis, Vol. III, p. 52."

April 4, 1946

Escandido, Calif.

I drove to Escandido & talked with J.B. Dixon about condors. Dixon sketched me the location of old nest on the San Luis Rey River as below:



The nest spots were NW by N from Roderick Mtn. top and close to the San Luis Rey River. A locked gate bars the road to caretaker's house - Dixon will lend me a water company (Escandido Mutual) key to get thru this gate. One can hike down the canal from



Gymnogyps californianus

April 4, 1946

Escondido, Calif.

there. At one point one must hike around a tunnel, & it was up the hill from this that an egg was taken under some boulders. This egg was at San Diego for some time & was purchased by Barnes around 1912. This egg is probably at the "Chicago Museum". The last condor seen in that area was seen by Dixon in 1910 - it was flying into a narrow canyon across the river from the caretaker's house (on E. side river). Dixon's father had a homestead near this area in the old days. Around 1898, J. B. D. said, condors could be seen every day. Apparently they fed on cattle at the La Guajigo (sp.?) ranch <sup>which was still there</sup> which was an old grant which included Roderick & Pine Mtn., and S. to near Lake Wahlford, & N. to the La Jolla Indian Reservation. Dixon tells of seeing buzzards standing around a cow carcass on this ranch. He walked close & heard noises inside the corpse. Thinking to get a coyote or bob cat, he kicked the carcass, & out came a condor - the bird had a "hard time" taking off, Dixon said. Only 1 egg had been taken from that area as far as Dixon knew (the Barnes egg). Another nesting place was near a narrow place in the river on the E. side near where the water undercuts the bank so that bank overhangs. Duck hawk & eagles nest near there now. Another supposed nest was at the west end of Palomar Mtn., but Dixon did not know its location. The condors seen nearest





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the coast were up San Mateo Creek (N.E. of San Onofre). They used to camp on the coast and hike up these canyons, returning to the camp in the evening. Condors were seen in 1907 or 1908 by Dixon in that area - he considers it a possible place for a nest. It is now in Camp Pendleton (Marine Corps Camp). Dixon has heard occasional reports from the desert side but questions their authenticity. Ralph Dixon (J.B.'s son) ~~has~~ works on the ranch near Escondido. He said he questioned officials at Borrego Park recently re condors - they knew of none in that area. Around Escondido Jim says condors were always rare - he only recalled seeing one, even in the old days. Dixon thinks there may still be condors in the Raderick Mtn. area. About the Finley & Bohman nest Dixon recalls the following: this nest was found by Philip Ringer who was doing some geological work & saw the adults feeding a flightless immature in a tree in Eaton Canyon in December 1904 (as J.B.D. recalls). Ringer still lives in the Los Angeles area - an engineer or adjuster in Maryland Casualty Co. as J.B.D. recalls. Dr. J. Krummell would not believe the story because condors were infrequent in the San Gabriel's even then. Dixon went to the place & saw the birds. ~~The location~~ a policeman shot



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a cordor there some shortly afterwards & the papers carried quite a bit of publicity on it (against the shooting). Apparently the nest was not searched for in 1905 because it was believed one of the pair had been killed - ~~Dixon~~ Dixon thinks the shot one was the youngster. Dixon said the young bird could climb the tree using bill to help in Dec. 1904 - the bird was apparently flightless & was seen being fed by the adults, however. In 1906 Finley & Bahlman went up to try to find the nest. They had decided it must be on the steep south side of the canyon. Dixon talks as if he were with them. They fired off a shotgun from the N. side of the canyon & the adult flushed from close below them (the gentle side of ~~the~~ canyon) <sup>from</sup> under a boulder. Dixon believed he had heard the adults hiss at times. Van Rossem knows where the old nest site is & has visited it. It is about 1 1/2 miles above the falls & in the old days was ~~quite a hard~~ <sup>not a hard</sup> hike. Dixon thinks the Volcan & Santa Rosa ranges ~~border possibilities~~ <sup>border</sup> but knows of no nests there. In Lower Calif. he thinks cordors as rare as here. ~~about 1<sup>st</sup>~~ In 1942, about February, ~~Dixon~~ <sup>Dixon</sup> says he saw one imm. cordor <sup>near</sup> on ~~at~~ the San Luis Rey near the mission flying NW. ~~from Dixon Ralph~~



Gymnogyps californianus

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Escondido, Calif.

Dixon knows birds well & has collected eggs but had heard or seen of no condors in recent years. I drove through Fallbrook and Elsinore on up to Corona, Pomona, & Pasadena. The E. side of the Santa Anas is steep & brush covered with occasional rock outcroppings & conifers atop the highest ridge. Rarest area was west of the Temescal district - near Trabuco Pk. area. For all practical purposes it appears that the condor is only a straggler south of Ventura County although occasionally a pair may nest in the San Gabriel, Santa Anas, or along the San Luis Rey River. It is not easy to conceive of condors crossing from the San Gabriel to the Santa Anas although it might be done gliding at high altitude or working to the San Jacinto area & back to the Santa Anas. Perhaps then ~~one or at least one pair is~~ <sup>one or at least one pair is</sup> a few ~~pairs are~~ <sup>are</sup> more or less resident in the Santa Anas <sup>& another in the</sup> ~~or~~ San Pedro Martir. A few condors could easily escape notice for long periods - comparatively large numbers in the Los Padres ~~for~~ Forest are rarely seen feeding or perched close enough for good observation (except at a few ~~known~~ restricted roasts). In the Elsinore area I saw a few dairy cattle - the lack of food on the plains east of the Santa



Gymnogyps californianus

April 4, 1946

Pasadena, Calif.

Anas is conspicuous - much more <sup>food</sup> on the west slopes I believe.

April 6, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Drove up Pale Canyon road leaving Fillmore at 2 p.m. Fog at about 4500 ft. level and occasional sprinkling rain. Met T. Work & H. Hill at Parking Place. They had procured a bull calf near Satcoy (for \$3) and placed the fresh carcass in Big Meadow near the blind there. They said they had seen what they took for 2 condors in the Big Cave area & possibly two others in trees. They had seen no condors nearby. Earlier in the day it had sprinkled & occasionally been foggy. They had visited the old horse carcass at head of Hopper Canyon & flushed a few ravens & turkey vultures from it. The fog closed in & light rain commenced about 3:30 p.m. Hill & Work drove down to Fillmore & Santa Monica. I went to camp at head of Hopper Canyon. It rained & fogged. About 5:30 p.m. I visited the old horse carcass. There was a 12 $\pm$ " opening in back of head & neck, an 18 $\pm$ " hole around anus, & two 4 $\pm$ " holes in abdomen. The thighs had been mostly consumed. Carcass still stunk muchly. There ~~was~~ <sup>were many</sup> spots of whitewash about (100+) as from many.





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April 6, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

ravens or buzzards. I found no condor evidence save what appeared to be one condor breast feather. Coyotes probably have fed here & possibly condors as well as the ravens & buzzards.

April 7, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Cumulostratus clouds at about 7000 ft. and fog coming up the canyon at 7 a.m. I drove to Old Cabin vicinity & watched #12 nest for about 10 minutes at 7:25-35 - no activity. Drove then to near Pyramid L.O. Fog had engulfed Rim & higher clouds had descended to about 6000 ft. Temp. <sup>54°F.</sup> 50°F. I hiked to Big Meadow & observed the calf carcass near blind there. The calf was ~~also~~ a brown & white bull, originally perhaps 100 pounds in weight & was wired to two iron stakes. All the viscera were gone, many ribs cracked, the upper leg completely gone, & the lower thigh eaten. Head, neck, forelegs, & thorax were still intact. Tracks at the carcass included raven and cat (a <sup>very</sup> large bobcat it appeared). I visited this carcass at about 9 a.m., then returned to Rim which was still fog engulfed at 10 a.m. Light W. breeze. At 11 a.m. I was at Old Cabin. The cloud bottom was just above Rim level there & I saw two condors atop cliff at Big Cave and an adult with feet down, approaching #11 nest area.




at 11:55 I was in Spring Canyon Meadow - sky cumulo.



Gymnogyps californianus

April 7, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

stratus at rim level, fair SW breeze. There seemed to be a condor squatted in #12 nest cave, ~~head~~ <sup>head</sup> ~~frantically~~ <sup>frantically</sup> ~~showing~~ <sup>showing</sup>. This squ. is sheltered from above by an overhanging rock which protrudes 9 $\pm$  ft <sup>no overhang</sup> ~~in cave~~. At 12:20 I saw two circling & rising over North Point. I timed 3 circles of one at 17, 18, & 19 seconds. at 500 $\pm$ ' alt. they flew glided toward Old Colvin, just under & sometimes in base of ~~cloud~~ cloud. at 12:35 I saw one adult perched atop Flat Pt. Occasional sunshine through cloud breaks. Turkey vultures soared with great steadiness near the foregoing circling condors. By 12:40 the perched adult gone. 1:05 I saw one circling  $\frac{1}{2}$   $\pm$  mile NE of North Point. This increased to 3 by 1:10. One spiraled near North Creek falls, feet down, but then resumed flight near North Point with feet up. 1:20 one circling over Arundell Ridge & 1 adult perched there. 1:30, 3 soaring over Arundell Ridge. One adult alighted atop a rock outcropping about 200 yds. W. of Saddle Pt. & a second landed <sup>there</sup> (with 6 flaps) about 30 sec. later. Osca spiraling lightly. One of these displayed, head , wings , tail dragging but not spread. The displayer walked slowly & 10 $\pm$ ' <sup>away</sup> ~~always~~ from other, then back, then out again . The displayer backed away when approached &



Gymnogyps californianus

April 7, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

packed at head of display. About 1:33 both one took off +  $5 \pm$  sec. later the other. ~~One~~ The first alighted in Saddle Ps., the second in a green Ps.  $300 \pm$  yds. further E. atop Arundell Ridge. The former was off again <sup>by time second had</sup> within ~~30 seconds~~ landed. I saw at least 2 others perched on Saddle Ps. - clouds dark + solid just below rim level - occasional sprinkling, fair SW breeze. The threatening rain may have driven the condors to ~~rest~~. I was watching from center of Saring Canyon Meadow. 1:45, 4 perched atop Arundell Ridge - 2 each in two green Ps. about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile W. of #11 nest, <sup>(possibly turkey vultures)</sup>. Returned to Old Cabin. Rim continued engulfed in cloud layer - fog + drizzle. I returned to camp at head of Hopper Canyon.

April 8, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

I was about to leave camp at 8:15 when I saw 3 condors circling in the vicinity of the old horse carcass (about 200' above). About 8:17 I saw 4 birds perched on a rock ledge <sup>50  $\pm$  yds.</sup> ~~100  $\pm$  yds.~~ S. of carcass - there may have been turkey vultures - and about 5 condors <sup>I thought I counted 13 condors, about 5 perched, but changed my mind when I got a better view later</sup> over North Ridge. Thinking that the condors were about to feed on the horse carcass, I drove to a point on the road about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile E. of the horse carcass. From there at 8:35 I saw two turkey vultures +  $2 \pm$  ravens on the carcass. Two



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April 8, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

imm. condors ~~circled~~ <sup>circled</sup> 100  $\pm$  ' over carcass & vicinity until 8:45 then worked S. ~~down~~ <sup>over</sup> the canyon. The early rising of the condors may well have been caused by the fogged-in conditions of last 2 days. Sky  $\frac{3}{10}$  cumulus, temp. 52°F., breeze light or absent. One adult which soared nearby at 8:17 had a slot in center of right secondaries & a space in tail  $\{ \}$ , & a #8 primary missing. ~~It~~ <sup>Can</sup> got stuck in mud, so I set out for #11 nest via ~~##~~ #1 nest & Hopper Creek. At 9:10 I saw one adult circling just N. of Hopper Canyon. It had a slot in center of secondaries of both wings & a #3 primary missing. 9:15 - saw same or another there (300'  $\pm$  alt.).

~~Started~~ down the canyon. At 10:15 I saw 1 condor overhead. 10:25, I was below #12 nest in creek bottom. I saw no activity at the hole. Bottom Cliff for about 2' below hole conspicuously whitewashed. 10:30, I saw 1 overhead. Cloudiness increased to about  $\frac{7}{10}$  by 11:15 a.m. At 12 m. I was below #11 nest cave I had seen no condors in the vicinity. I climbed the cliff and entered cave about 12:20 - the egg was gone but 3 fragments of shell (about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " square each) showed that it had been destroyed rather than "collected". The points outside the cave were clean of whitewash so the destruction must have occurred some time ago. I





Gymnogyps californianus

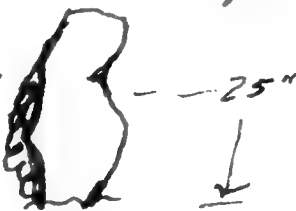
April 8, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Cal. F.

found 2 scats, black, <sup>one</sup> about ~~1 1/2~~ <sup>3</sup> inches long on the cave floor. No scorns or other rat evidence here. I collected  $12 \pm$  bone fragments of apparently old age from the cave floor. There were two damp spots - possibly from excreta. The whole interior of this cave bears old whitewash to about 20" above the floor. The upper portions are pink - possibly an alga that thrives on excrement. Thus I believe this to be a much used cave. The failure of this egg may explain the mating displays I have seen near this cave after egg was found. Cause of destruction: possibly ravens. Perhaps adults broke it. Perhaps my March 3 visit kept the birds off too long & egg addled - very doubtful, else they would still be incubating a whole egg. No rocks larger than about 2" long on the floor & of possibly recent origin - ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> fall <sup>of a small rock</sup> from the 4' high ceiling might break or chip the egg, however. There were 3 or 4 squirts of old ~~tobacco~~ tobacco or oil colored excrement on the walls. The floor plan of this cave is about this:



Entrance to cave shaped:  
 max. width  
 18" occurring  
 16" above floor.



Practical height 25"

From cave entrance to rear (near rock) - 49". I then investigated the slope <sup>starting</sup>  $30 \pm$  'below the nest cave



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Hopper Canyon, Calif.

and found most of the egg including the membrane, still crawling with maggots & quite juicy. The egg had apparently been crushed but showed no evidence of raven or mammal attack. There were some bones up to  $\frac{3}{4}$ " long - the embryo no doubt - <sup>so incu</sup> ~~so egg~~ <sup>had</sup> ~~was~~ well started when the incident <sup>occurred.</sup> ~~occurred~~. I suspect that the adults broke it somehow. Left the nest area about 2 p.m. & returned up Hopper Creek to head of canyon and base camp. At 3:30 I saw 2 (probably adults) perched on one bare <sup>branch</sup> ~~branch~~ of a green Ps. on Arundell Ridge & another (imm.?) perched ~~also~~ on top limb of flat Flat Ps., 100  $\pm$  yds. E. of the pair. Reached #1 nest area about 5 p.m. Flushed 6  $\pm$  ravens from the old horse carcass.

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Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Hiked from base camp to a point on the road about 1500 yds. W. of #12 nest and 1000 yds. SW of the horse carcass. From there I could also view Arundell Ridge, Big Mdw., & Hopper Mtn. At 8:15 I was set for observation. Sky  $\frac{3}{10}$  cirrus, faint breeze, about 56°F. At 8:25 I saw 6 condors circling just W. of Condor Cliff. At 8:30 I saw one flapping low over Arundell Ridge & counted 9 total in air. At 8:31 I saw 2 (one chasing other) low over Arundell Ridge, 2 over the SE Rim, & 4 others circling 500  $\pm$  over Arundell Ridge. At 8:35 counted 8 - 2 alighted atop highest tree on



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Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Arundell Ridge. With telescope I saw 3 on this tree + 1 on Flat Ps., 100±' away. One of the 3 took off - the branch shook violently + other bird on that branch raised + flapped wings to balance. 8:38 I saw 14 total - 12 in air scattered from SE Canyon to Spring Meadow + 2 perched on Arundell Ridge. One circled 300±' over old horse carcass. 8:41 one adult flap glided up the canyon to near North Creek, then flap circled using 4-12 flaps consecutively, rising with the flaps, then gliding, the net result being an altitude gain. 8:45, I saw one adult stop a point 100± yds. S. of the horse carcass. This bird held wings up V as if about to take off. It then flapped down near the horse. I caused some disturbance then breaking brush + getting telescope ready for observation of that area. 8:53 saw an adult on the point S. of horse again + a few seconds later it was gone. It is probable that both yesterday + today my presence, even at a distance, prevented condors from feeding on this carcass. Saw 2 condors + 3 turkey vultures circling over White Cliffs, 3 circling over Old Calum, 3 over Big Mdw., 1 over Spring Canyon Mdw., 2 over Arundell Ridge. 9:00, saw 7 scattered from over horse carcass to Old Calum. Two were very ragged having gaps in secondaries on both sides + at least primary on both sides (#6 on one). 9:07, one circled above #1 nest, 2 over N. Rim, 2 over Big Mdw., 2 perched (one on Flat Ps., one on higher Ps. 100±' away), 1 near Hopper



11-11-66

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Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Mtn. (8 total). 9:10, one atop highest Ps. did <sup>a</sup> wind blow & took off. One gone from Flat Ps. to (I believe) the high Ps. It walked over to other, flapping (imm. to adult?). 9:13 the last one took off from Arundell Ridge - none <sup>left</sup> perched. One adult skinned by 100±' from me. 9:15, saw 1 in dead Ps. at head of Parking Canyon - stayed at least ½ hr.. 9:20, 1 circling over N. Pt., 1 in head of Pyramid Canyon, 1 over White Cliff. 9:23, 3 over Old Calvin & 2 over E. end of Arundell Ridge. 62°F. 9:27, the 3 were 100±' over me. One was a near adult with tip of #4 left primary missing; one an imm. with #3 primary out each wing; one an imm. with large gap in left secondaries. These decreased to 2 & circled within ½ mile of me until 9:39. 9:40, 1 adult circling over White Point. 9:45, an imm. circled close over me (#3 left sec primary out). 10:06, 2 over Old Calvin. 10:08, 1 adult close over me. 10:27, 2 adults soared 100±' over me, then toward N. Pt., then circled back toward me & flew glided W., each giving one dip while wings flexed. 10:40, 2 adults over me without pausing to circle - one ~~boy~~ had a <sup>gap</sup> close to body on right side. These came from White Point area & I saw a third ~~flapping~~ flapping from that direction. Light breeze, sky 3/10 cirrus, 66°F. 10:55, saw 2 about 300' over Old Calvin; they flew glided W. into escape drainage. From 11:18 to 12:53 I witnessed an episode of "house hunting". At 11:18 I saw 1 adult alight in a small





5

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 84

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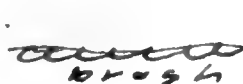
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Gymnogyps californianus

April 9, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

(18±") pathole about 200 yds. S. of & one ledge below North Creek Falls. A second adult landed 20±' away, then took off & alighted in the same hole. Ravens perched & flapped within 4 or 5 ft. of the condors. At 11:21 one adult took off. The remaining adult stood in entrance & twice thrust the neck out to snap at a raven hovering close. At 11:23 the second took off and alighted in a 6±' long pathole about 100 ft. further down the canyon in same big ledge and adjacent to a water trickle on the rock face. The first adult was already in this  hole. The heads were close together much of the time, sometimes close to the floor. Perhaps they pecked at one another's head. At 11:45 one displayed for about 1 minute. The displayer waddled from side to side as it walked back & forth, toward & away from the other unresponsive adult. Head  as usual & ruff down. 11:51 both took off within about 10 seconds & soared over North Point. They put feet down when 100±' over the point & circled down to near the same hole. At 11:58 they landed in a similar hole 100± yds. further S. on the cliff & at same level - this hole was well whitewashed and about 20 ft. from a green Co.  <sup>Top ledge</sup>. This hole was about 1/4 mile N. of #12 nest & in next lower ledge. 


Here again the adults stood a long time, heads close



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Hopper Canyon, Calif.

together. At 12:03 an imm. soared over me - 12:05, it was 100±' over horse carcass. 12:10, 2 over White Cliff. 12:12, the 2 about 500' over horse, 1 with feet down. Apparently they passed up their food. At 12:20 the pair was still in the pathole  facing in, & at 12:40 the same. I saw 1 land atop Condor Cliff about 1/4 mile S. of the cliff corner. There was much flapping - it appeared as if there may have been a mounting followed by mating display (long distance & heat waves interfered). Two left that spot abruptly at 12:45. 12:48 one in the pathole displayed for about a minute. Both went in the hole. Much heads together. 12:50, both facing out. 12:52, one off, & 12:53 the other. They skimmed past #12 nest & over North Point & glided down over North Slope. 1:08 I saw 2 circling together 500±' above Arundell Ridge. 2:15, one circling 100±' above the horse carcass. 2:18 two others from N. joined the one at 200±'. 2:21, one of the 3, an adult with ragged tail & secondaries & #5 left primary short (right missing) circled above me briefly. Other two disappeared. Sky clear; breeze faint or absent; 60°F. 3:05, 2 adults & an imm. soared E. over the Rim near me. One circled (2 circles, 15 sec. each). They rose over North Point area. One adult had feet down. Imm. had a slot in outer secondaries. Adult secondaries ragged. 3:07, 4 now - 1 glided toward Arundell Ridge



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April 9, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

+ 3 toward White Point (where lost). 3:10, 5, apparently from N., over N. Ridge area - 3 from Small Mdw. Pass joined at 3:14. Air calm. 3:15 - saw 2 more at about 5000' level beyond NE rim. Most glided slowly toward Big Cave area. Saw one chase another, twisting in a fast glide. 3:19, 7 circling 500±' above Big Cave area. 3:20 two adults circled over North Point, one with feet down. The sooted pair #12 rest + to vicinity of North Creek Falls (at cliff top level) then back over North slope (3:25). "Return time" about 3:15 today. 3:40, 4 circling over North Ridge and 1 over White Point. 3:45, I saw 7 circling at about 4500' level + 3 over White Cliffs (10 total). 3:55, two adults over North Point descending southward. 4:00 - two (same?) headed W. over Old Cabin, circled + rose to 500±'; then split up, one being over North Ridge at 4:07 + other?. I walked toward Old Cabin to view Big Cave area. at 4:27 I saw 2 over Small Meadow Pass entering Hopper Basin + and at least 5 circling close to Big Cave. 4:38 I saw 2 perched on Whitewash Ledge, 1 atop cliff, <sup>+ 1 on ledge</sup> over Big Cave, 2 atop Roost Tree, + at least 3 circling near there. The two atop tree flew to cliff, one landing in patch + 1 on an open ledge. I looked straight into #12 nest - sun was shining in + it was apparently empty. This fact plus seeing no activity there today while especially watching for it leads to the conclusion that the nest has failed. 4:45, at least 8



Gymnogyps californianus

April 9, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

perched at Big Cave area but frequent shifting. Saw an adult leave foot of pool. 4:55, at least  $1\frac{3}{2}$  at Big Cave area & much shifting still - 1 atop Lost Tree, none at pool, 1 circling feet down, 5 on a white wash ledge, 2 on ledge over cave, & atop cliff (2, 2's). 5 p.m. - also 1 adult flat on top branch of Flat Po. & another circling above West Ridge. Light breeze still, smoky haze in deeper Canyon. So - at least 15 condors seen. Returned to base camp.

April 10, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

At 7:25 I was in car blind about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile E. of the horse carcass. 3 ravens & 3 turkey vultures were feeding on the carcass at that time. Sky clear, fair E. breeze, very dry 54°F. 7:55, 6 ravens & 5-6 turkey vultures constantly at carcass - occasionally a t.v. pecked at a raven & drove it back. I saw 1 adult - then 2 adults & one imm. at 7:58 - over the rim SW of carcass. They soared 100±' above the brush & rocks to N. rim, then cut back & skimmed 50±' above rocks near the carcass (8:03). 8:09, the 3 skimmed 30±' over the carcass, imm. especially close, but not down, imm. following <sup>the</sup> pair. 8:12, one adult alighted atop the rock point about 50 yds. S. of the carcass, & imm. beside it. Ravens & t.v.'s continued feeding. The imm. launched to edge of the cliff almost immediately & by 8:15 was (? - down near carcass?). Neither bird was banded. Adult stood alone, ruff up. A turkey



21 - cf. eggs, head

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April 10, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

vulture passed 10±' over the car - car gave a casual look at mast. 8:21 the adult flapped about 10' to cliff edge & stood with feet wide apart & ~~peered~~ <sup>peered</sup> ~~peering~~ about in all directions. 8:23 imm. alighted 6±' from adult. Adult flapped down to carcass & walked to abdomen side. Pecked gingerly at abdomen, raising head between pecks. 8:24 imm. down 6±' S. of carcass at 8:25. Ravens & <sup>one</sup> turkey vulture continued to feed. 8:27 adult hopped atop carcass & 1 turkey vulture flushed from far side (only t. v. left). Ravens & imm. <sup>out of sight to W. of</sup> ~~checked momentarily~~. 8:28, adult <sup>imm.</sup> ~~apparently took off~~ <sup>carcass</sup>. ~~imm. was already gone without having pecked at the carcass.~~ <sup>one adult</sup> Adult flap-glided low over rocks leading N. into Pin drainage. ~~Apparently the adult took the horse & found it unsatisfactory. Ruff was down while feeding. Adult was standing up, not on heels, while pecking at carcass (abdomen).~~ 8:35 - must have been another adult skimming off - I saw adult & imm. walk into view near the carcass. 8:36, adult atop carcass on heels, reaching down to abdomen & pecking gingerly. 2 ravens about 4' from adult, feeding. Saw Red Peyton's pickup <sup>driving up the road</sup> ~~park about 1/2 mile W. of carcass. but got out of sight from it.~~ 8:38, adult had pecked from abdomen side for 2± minutes, then hopped on top again. Peyton's truck arrived at my car with Sidney <sup>Jr.</sup> and Leonard Peyton. They parked



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April 10, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

near me & walked over to my car in full view. The adult continued feeding. Peyton left at 8:48. Adult flushed about 8:51 - apparently frightened by truck - and soared S. down the canyon. Car was  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from carcass. Buzzards had been soaring close over the adult but only ravens fed with the carcase. The buzzards alighted a few seconds after carcase left. Adult had been pecking at neck area from S. side of carcass when truck left me - adult had stopped feeding then. It did not circle back near carcass but went apparently straight down canyon. Whereabouts of the imm. unknown. 8:57, 2 adults soared 200' over the carcass - not the same pair as earlier today (one earlier adult had 2 gaps in right wing, #1 on 2 primary + another gap). 9 a.m. - 4 adults soared N. over Rim W. of carcass & joined the other 2 over N. Rim. The Buzzards were probably hiking up the Rim W. of <sup>carcase</sup> carcass by now. 9:04, the carcass crawling with about 10 Buzzards and one fuzzy headed imm. carcase stood calmly 10' away (same imm. doubtless). Adult & an imm. soared <sup>100'</sup> 200' over carcass. The imm. edged around the carcass at about 10' distance, hesitantly as if afraid to go in with the mass of turkey vultures. An adult carcase soared 50' above the horse carcass (9:08). My view partially obscured so couldn't locate the imm. - not feeding, however.



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9:19, two adults flew glided 300±' over carcass heading E. The carcass monopolized by about 12 constantly shifting, flapping, jostling turkey vultures - about 6 ravens kept in the background by them. 9:30 - 67°F., fair E. wind. I had seen no more sign of the immature near carcass. 9:40 I again saw the imm. about 15' N. of carcass - a raven landed near it & imm. backed up. It <sup>seemed</sup> ~~seemed~~ to be looking "hopefully" or "longingly" <sup>imm.</sup> at the carcass. This appeared to be a one year old bird - some white at tip secondary coverts. Apparently a young raven is below a group of turkey vultures in "peck order." 9:43, the imm. standing 10±' S. of carcass, facing it. Imm. ran at a raven which perched near it - raven retreated. About 5 buzzards & 5 ravens now on carcass - much quieter than before. 9:50 the imm. flapped 50±' W. of carcass - out of my sight behind bushes. 9:55 the imm. stood about 5' S. of carcass and danced around NW of it, then N. of it by 9:57. Wings up & flapped some in moving - flight apparently very easy on this east windy day - excellent soaring conditions it appears. <sup>10:05</sup> 9:05, the imm. walked around near (E.) end of carcass & stood 10±' S. of it again; <sup>then out of sight.</sup> About 5 turkey vultures & 4 ravens still fed. 10:22 the imm. appeared 15±' to NW of carcass, then flapped atop a boulder about 20' W. of it, nearly "falling on its face" in landing.



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The underparts of this bird seemed quite downy - light areas (down probably) at tops of tarsi & on sternum - doubtless a 1945 youngster & smart enough to find some food by following adults. 10:28 a raven hovered over the youngster, swinging from side to side. The youngster wobbled from side to side with the raven and twice reached up with open bill toward the raven. 10:30, now only 3 ravens and 1 Turkey vulture at the carcass. Imm. left its boulder perch (out of sight again). 10:38 all the birds left carcass - I saw two imm. condors in air close to carcass; they <sup>cirled</sup> ~~soared~~ law over #1 nest camp, then down the canyon. The ravens were back on carcass within a few seconds. 10:41 I saw an adult soar down canyon via same route - perhaps it caused the alarm. I supposed the imm. had left carcass area. Turkey vultures back on carcass by 10:43. I went to the carcass & took photos of it. The neck & rear end were almost completely gone - the windpipe exposed. There were hundreds of flies on the carcass. About 12:00 the Peyton boys returned - they had not found the duck hawk nest at Whiteacre Pk. nor seen any condors after leaving Hopper Canyon. We hiked down the road & along cliff tops to Big Cave top (arrived about 1:25). Condor tracks - thick in the wet sand there & the pool full & falls flowing. The tracks went back to about 75' from falls brink. We collected a set of duck





Gymnogyps californianus

April 10, 1946

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hank eggs from W. face of the Condor Cliff, then returned to the falls (2:30). We saw 1 adult on Whitewash ledge there. It took off when we were about 300' from it & walking parallel <sup>at</sup> 50±' higher level - the adult soared straight down the canyon. At 2:35 we saw 3 adults and one ragged dark immature scattered overhead. We continued on up to road & drove to Fillmore. Met Ed Harrison near Pete Legan's & took him to Fillmore with me. At Pete Legan's met talkative old Herman Keene. He said that 50 or 60 years ago there were 4 large sheep ranches between the Despe & Wheeler Canyon & that he had seen at least 100 condors then & that they roosted in Pine & Caldwater Canyon. He was going to set lion traps near Whiteside Pk. - he said that he had caught 8 lions in all in that area. At 4:55 I saw 2 condors soaring E. over Pole Canyon near Oat Mtn. - a late return time but good soaring conditions might explain this.

April 11, 1945

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

With Ed Harrison drove to Parking Place on Hopper Rim. He had brought a stuffed doe deer - stuffed in lying dead position, with glass eyes - quite realistic looking - from Los Angeles. We placed this about 80 ft. N. of the blind in Big Meadow and wired it to a stake, then entered the blind at 2 p.m. We had seen no condors up to this time. <sup>Very</sup> a very clear day - and warm - with fair E. wind.

0512

Gymnogyps californianus



April 11, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Of the calf Work & Hill put out last April 6, only one leg remained. The grass was somewhat <sup>trampled</sup> thereabout but there was no excrement or feathers to indicate that condors might have been there. Apparently good soaring conditions today. 67°F. at 3 p.m. There were a few flies on the doe for <sup>had</sup> replaced the old calf leg under it. Sky 5/10 <sup>cirrus</sup> cumulus & breeze light by 4 p.m. At 4:15 I saw at least 2 condors soaring back & forth near Big Cave & alighting in potholes or on ledges there. We left blind at 4:30. at 5 p.m. from Old Cabin I counted at least 8 condors - 1 adult atop Flat Pt., two on Roost Tree, & the others on cliffs & ledges at Big Cave. Returned to base camp.

April 12, 1946

alto. Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Air calm, overcast with stratus clouds. Neither sunshine nor wind - so poor soaring conditions presumably. We went to North Point to investigate the #12 nest cave there. At 8:15 I saw 2 condors on Roost Tree. Below the nest cave in the brush scattered over about 20 ft. I found fragments of the egg - about 1/3 of total less. Also I found 4<sup>+</sup> bone pieces which may have come from nest. Finally descended to the cave but because of overhang could not get in. The entrance was about 18" wide at base, narrower above,  shaped. It was about thus in floor plan , the max.

04 21

Gymnogyps californianus

April 12, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

minimum depth being about 4 ft. The floor was level and mainly of fine rock chips rather than fine sand. Scattered on the floor was egg shell-fragments of about half an egg. I saw no rock which might have dropped on it. This circumstance indicates that the egg was broken in the nest - the same thing which happened to #11 nest. Found one wing feather below the nest and one on slope beside it. The cliff proved to be about 75 ft. high & the nest cave halfway down. At 9:45 we left the site (Ed Kernion & I). We saw 1 condor perched on Arundell Ridge then. Had seen none in air - but did see a few turkey vultures in very steady flight. By 10:30 a fair W. breeze. By 10:45 we were in the blind at horse carcass. I set out the stuffed doe about 100 ft. from blind on the open road about 20 ft. from the stinking horse. No ravens nor turkey vultures were at the horse carcass. By 12:00 <sup>overhead (about 5,000 alt. cumulus)</sup> sky hazy but not overcast, 56° F. in cave blind, fair breeze. 12:55, a black-billed magpie pecked at oxilla of horse carcass. Earlier one <sup>raven</sup> pecked for a while. Both apparently frightened by camera noises. Neither gave the stuffed doe more than a glance. 1:38 - we saw two condors soaring about 1/2 mile SE & 300±' above tract level. 1:40 - 4 condors about 1/2 mile S.



Gymnogyps californianus

April 12, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

of carcass (5 at 1:41), circling. These condors - nor any others - ~~was~~ did not come near carcass by 3:30. One turkey vulture flew close once but none alighted. I do not believe any condors saw the stuffed deer today. We left blind about 3:40 & drove to near Old Cabin. From there at 4:15 I saw at least 4 condors flying about the cliffs at Big Cave & at least one on ledge at same time (5 or + total). Saw 2 perched on Flat Ps. & a nearby Ps. also - so 7 total at least. Breeze still fair from W. & sky clear over head. Returned to base camp.

April 13, 1946

Clear morning, light breeze by 7 a.m. - should be good soaring today. At 7:30 a.m. Ed Harrison & I were in cave blind at old horse carcass. We set the stuffed doe about 20-30' SE of the horse. Two turkey vultures were perched in a tree 20-100+ yds. E. of horse carcass. Carcass was mainly maggots and slop inside now though hide still mostly intact. By 8 a.m. 4± ravens had pecked at horse carcass & 5 turkey vultures were perched about 50 yds. from carcass. 9:30 - one turkey vulture alighted close to horse carcass, but others left without approaching. The comparatively large number of turkey vultures, ravens, & some condors which fed or approached the horse car

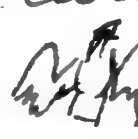




Gymnogyps californianus

April 13, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

case a few days ago was probably caused by preceding bad weather which prevented feeding & brought on hunger. We left blind about 10 a.m. About 10:10 I saw 4 condors soaring N. about 1/2 mile E. of horse carcass - 3 headed on toward the Agua Blanca, the fourth turned back S.. We went to camp then drove down the road a ways then hiked to Big Cave arriving about 11:30. At 11:05 I saw one <sup>over</sup> ~~near~~ North slope. At 11:30 ~~one~~ was flap gliding 300'± overhead when a duck hawk attacked it. The duck hawk made 6 successive attacks from above the condor. The condor ~~man~~ flap glided fast toward Arundell Ridge & each time the hawk approached the condor twisted vertically, wings strongly flexed , so that side was presented to hawk. The condor snapped down immediately to level position after each twist - to the naked eye the motion looked like a complete "snap roll" but actually the condor did not turn over. The duck hawk desisted near Arundell Ridge. The condor flap-glided & descended parallel to Arundell Ridge. This action commenced about 3/4 mile NE of the duck hawk's nesting site. At 12 m. Ed & I were in my tent blind 100' SW of lip of falls atop Big Cave. Sky was



Gymnogeys californicus

April 13, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

7/10 cumulus by then, the clouds having formed since 10 a.m. at about 6000 ft. level. At 1:05 one adult alighted on a ledge below Whitewash Ledge, &  $3 \pm$  min. later soared toward Roost Tree (not visible). At 1:08 another adult spiraled over us, feet down, & alighted on Whitewash Ledge. An imm. circled over Big Cave for  $5 \pm$  minutes then departed. The perched adult had cheeks puffed out (not neck) and ruff up high. Ed photoed this bird in 35 mm. About 1:40 this adult left & (same?) lit in a shaded pathole  $40 \pm'$  below the former perch. The bird moved head every 5 sec. or less as if looking about. At 1:47 the adult took off as if toward Roost Tree. <sup>68°F.</sup> 2:55, one imm. alighted atop cliff over Whitewash Ledge. It scratched head by 'squatting' down & scrapping sides of head on rock several times. Two other immatures alighted  $10 \pm'$  from the first - these wrestled heads a bit. One imm. flew to cliff top above Big Cave, then back to group  $2 \pm$  minutes later. At 3:05 07 there were 2 adults & 4 imm. within about 15' on the cliff top. Two imm. pecked at each others ruff & head as if playfully; adults preened; other imm. pecked at rock by their feet. One imm. off about 3:09 & landed atop cliff  $50 \pm'$  N. of pool about 3:13. 3:18 a third adult alighted by other 2 - 3 adults & 3 imm. within about 15'



Gymnogyps californianus

April 13, 1946

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and all quite calm. 3:20, one adult walked toward the immatures in the groups & the<sup>3</sup> immatures & one adult took off (leaving 2 adults). One adult alighted near pool & 2 imm., in a single small pathole. The one near pool walked across the wet sand and about 4 ft. into the shallow ( $3\pm$ " ) water. It took  $2\pm$  sips, then stood for  $30\pm$  sec., then walked back toward cliff brink, out of the water, & stood looking about. the movie camera buzz seemed to make the adult attentive. at 3:30 the adult & imm. at pool ( $8\pm'$  apart) took off. There was a general shifting about and at 3:31 only 1 (adult) remained atop the cliff while two patholes below Whitewash Ledge & the ledge over Big Cave were occupied. A frog had croaked loudly near the two at pool - no reaction noted in the birds. 3:40, the adult from atop cliff & one other alighted  $40\pm'$  apart on Whitewash Ledge; an imm. perched atop cliff above them. 3:42, one adult left ledge & alighted atop cliff - the imm. left as adult approached. 3:45 - one adult atop cliff, one on ledge, 1 in pathole - an imm. alighted atop cliff over Big Cave (4 total visible). Sun mainly obscured by clouds; fair but intermittent breeze. 3:50 - the imm. off - one seen circling  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile<sup>+</sup> N. of Big Cave. The imm. approached; adult atop cliff took off & followed; the imm. alighted atop cliff (where adult had been);

948  
17-24

4-5

dr.

both

as fresh

drops

4 in 4

mm. peak - 20 min. wet.

color - skin yellow, head red pink

5:15 - all but 5 - lost left foot

5:20 - 13 more

25-24 (11 min. & 1/2)

35-26 (12 min.)

40-13 on walk, 5 at 20 min.

very fast + deeper than.  
in foot - make him

Gymnogyys californicus

April 13, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

adult landed there too flushing imm.. Another adult (4th) landed in a pothole  $\frac{1}{4} \pm$  mile N. of Big Cove - so at least 4 adults & 4 imm. present. 3:57, another (5th) adult spiraled in & landed in the same pothole, <sup>already</sup> occupied by an adult - one of the two flew out  $5 \pm$  sec. later (5 ad. + 4 imm present). 4 p.m. - 5 adults & 3 imm. visible perched; 2 adults together atop cliff over Whitewash Ledge, 2 adults & 2 imm. on the Ledge; - then others came in & there was lots of action until 5 p.m. Until about 4:30 I counted 17 at once (9 adults, 8 imm.) and by 5 p.m., 24 (at least 11 imm.). Saw 2 or 3 adults and  $5 \pm$  imm. drink. Drinking was by nibbling  $3 \pm$  times at water, then bringing head up. One adult & 2 imm. took a fairly good bath. In bathing, the birds walked into the water up to heels, then squatted down with breast in water, laid head & neck in the water, & gave a sideswipe which threw water up on the back & half spread wings. Ed photoed the bathing. The immatures pulled up some green grass but did not appear to swallow it. One imm., standing in  $4 \pm$ " of clear water, picked a  $6 \pm$ " long twig from the bottom of the pool, & carried it  $5 \pm'$  in the bill as if playing with it. One adult tugged at an



5:50 - with Group of 15 on walk & hot.  
Aunt!

Gymnogyps californicus

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old primary, tip lying on the sand, holding the shaft down with its feet & tugging at shaft & web. An imm. did likewise with same feather later. The adult carried this feather 8' (& across the pool) in its bill. Once I saw one adult display at another, walking away & toward, tail dragging but not spread - Ed got a few frames of this (16 mm.). At one time there were 4 imm. in the pool at once and 8 or 9 in or within 15' of the pool. The auto tent blind did not seem to disturb the birds - adults perched within 70' & an imm. within 50', ~~both~~ at times & stayed for several minutes. I saw one or more "one year birds" - a chevron of white at tip secondary coverts & gray down at heels. Some red eyed immatures had no wing chevron at all. There were several "in between" or "near adult" birds - the heads of these were fairly solidly covered with black ~~or~~ but showing the adult coloration through the feathers - only the nalar area seemed bare. Crown & occiput were feathered. These had the magenta spot ventrally on neck like adults. As to adult head coloration: the most reddish orange is on the rostrum. The skin area is most yellow. Occiput is yellow but

6:05-4 at. of, 130-2

Gymnogyps californianus

April 13, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

<sup>posterior to</sup>  
dorsally behind the occiput the skin is pink, not orange - this pink area extends around the sides of the neck behind the ears. Bright magenta patch topped by light gray above front of ruff. The magenta patch bulges more than rest of the neck as if thinner skin. There was much pecking, head wrestling, & snapping between immatures & occasionally adults. In general there was no animosity between adults & immatures at the pool, however. Sky cleared about 4:45. at 5:10 there was a gust of east wind which caused the tent blind to flap violently. at 5:15 all the crows left the pool area, a <sup>1 or 2</sup> few at a time, & other birds left the cliffs so that only 5 remained visible. This was last use of the pool area today. Perhaps the blind movement frightened the birds. at 5:20 I counted 13 perched; at 5:25, 24 (11 immatures); at 5:35, 26 (12 immatures) perched about the Big Cave area (on cliffs N. of Big Cave as I could not view Roost Tree or cliffs W. of the cave). 5:40, I saw 13 on a Whitewash Ledge & 5 atop cliff above it. Quiescence much greater than before 5:15 but still occasional shifts. at 5:50 the sunset line crossed cliff top - there were still 6 scattered atop cliff & 15 on whitewash.



2 11 1

Gymnogyps californianus

April 13, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

Ledge (counting points below the main ledge), 6:05;  
4 left atop cliff (some adults), 13 on a Whitewash  
Ledge. 6:15, 3 scattered atop cliff (2 or + adults).  
Whitewash Ledge appeared:



The 3 rockholes above

cave were also

occupied & two

were on the ledge just

above cave top. There was

some shift about once per

minute or more frequently (6:20). apparently none

was crunched <sup>flat</sup> or had head tucked in by 6:25 (59°

F., no breeze). 6:30 - 4 atop cliff, 20 total

visible, still frequent shifting. By 6:45 all

had left the cliff top. at 7:07 I could count 17 on the

cliff & saw 1 fly off. about 7:10 I heard one fly - the last

to fly this evening. Stars out but fairly bright moonlight.

at 7:30 I could see at least 8 on Whitewash Ledge.

During the play around the pool & when birds were on  
cliff nearby I heard about 6 separate times a grunt  
which sounded much like suppressed human belch.

April 14, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

At 12:40 a.m., by moonlight I observed the condors

on Whitewash Ledge in apparently the same positions

they had been in at 7:30 last evening - at least



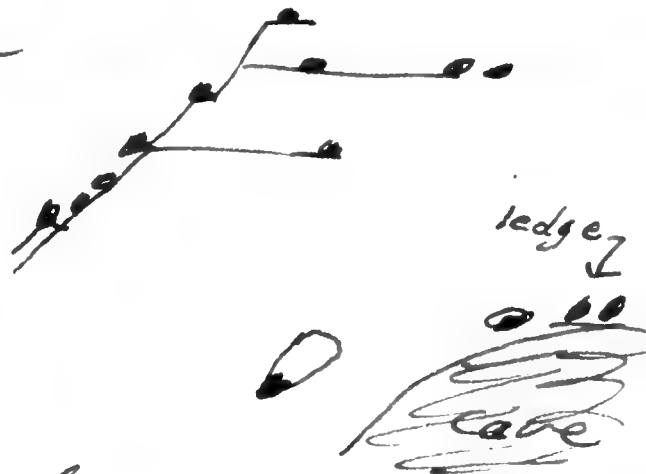
Gymnogyps californianus

April 14, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

10 were in the open on Whitewash Ledge, thus:

Several apparently had their heads tucked in so that they appeared headless, but most appeared to be standing rather than crunched flat.



at 5 a.m. I saw 3 fly from the ledges & at least 1 land -

there was some shifting. I counted at least 12 on Whitewash Ledge however, & at least 5 had heads tucked in.

At least 3 were crunched flat with heads tucked in.

At 6:30 there were only 3 on Whitewash Ledge. One adult perched on a point on our side of the pool & sunned its back. Two immatures waded & drank

at 6:35. At 6:50 there were 9 atop the cliff in sunshine & 3 still on shaded ledges. There was a fair breeze from E., 43°F., at 6:50.

At 6:54, one adult drank by nibbling at water surface for about 4 sec., then raising up for about 5 sec. - took about 3 drinks this way. Clear sky today.

6:58, 6 in ledges in shade, 2 imm. at pool, 6 condors atop cliff (19 total).

7:02, 4 imm. in water at foot of pool, occasionally drinking, & an adult next to pool. "In between" has pink sides

to neck posterior to ear - occipital black continued down neck in this region



ear

7:08 - 8 atop cliff;

7 on ledges where roosted & most roosted last night.

7:09, an imm. gave 10 flaps in 4 seconds in shifting





Gymnogyps californianus

April 14, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

perched 7:20, the 4 imm. & 1 adult near pool all flew at once as if in fright - 2 imm. alighted about 50 yds. <sup>(Probably camera movement)</sup> NNE of the pool on the rocks. I saw no cause for alarm. At least 2 flew down the canyon. 7:23, 5 atop cliff & 6 on ledge on cliff face. Sunshine ~~is~~ now ~~on~~ on part of Whitewash Ledge. Before 7:20 I saw one imm. peck at & carry an old feather near pool, & one pick up a long grass ~~stem~~ stalk in bill & then drop it. <sup>Two</sup> The birds went about 40' back from falls brink & walked about in green grass. One imm. pecked at soil & plants atop cliff over Big Cave. Heard a loud suppressed belch when adult near. Adult jumped at an imm. near pool & imm. fled - I heard then a growl or snarl from one of the two. 7:34, 6 imm. & 2 adults (adults side by side) atop cliff above Whitewash Ledge - this 20' x 30' (approx.) slanting table seems a favorite gathering place. One adult there ~~crouched~~ <sup>crouched</sup> flat at cliff edge. 7:37, an adult & imm. turned backs, wings spread, atop cliff over Big Cave. 7:40, 7 in sunshine on Whitewash Ledge - 1 adult crouched flat, all quiescent as if basking in the sun. One adult still on shaded ledge above Big Cave. 7:50, 2 adults & 1 imm. of the 8 told on Whitewash Ledge are crouched flat; 8 atop cliff above these, all but 2 immatures (some immatures nibbling at brush at edge of rock); 1 on ledge over cave as before (adult) and 1 imm. atop cliff  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile to N. They



Gymnogyps californianus

April 14, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

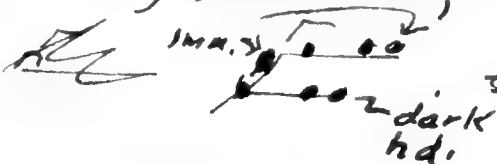
clear, sun bright, breeze light or absent. Strangely, practically no sunning. Condors very quiet - quietest since sunrise - with no perch shifting for over 10 minutes. A raven was within 10' of adult, imm., & drinking condors this morning - no reaction. 8 a.m., 4 imm. in a huddle atop cliff about 1/4 mile N. of Big Cave. 8:05, one adult atop cliff walked up to other & other retreated - this occurred 3± times until chased one was at cliff edge. Chasing adult delayed a little nuzzling with 2 immatures. Adult at cliff edge flew & other followed 30± sec. later they alighted on a point or in a pothole about 1/4 mile N. of Big Cave. Flight seemed very labored - sunshiny but no wind (56°F. in blind). 8:13, 8 on Whitewash Ledge & 1 <sup>on ledge</sup> over Big Cave about as before; only 1 atop cliff over Whitewash Ledge & 1 atop cliff to N. as before - 11 total in view, only the 1 adult not in sunshine. Of the 8 on Whitewash Ledge, 4 were adults, one a near-adult, & 3 dark headed immatures. One adult & one imm. were crouched flat still. These birds mainly "just looked around" lazily, seldom preening. About 8:20 one imm. left. 8:25, the 7 mainly preening quietly - 2 still crouched flat. Adult had spread one wing half out for 2± min. while crouched flat. 8:30, top adult on ledge left - one (same?) alighted on a 60±' lower point & stretched wings to sun back - right wing, using



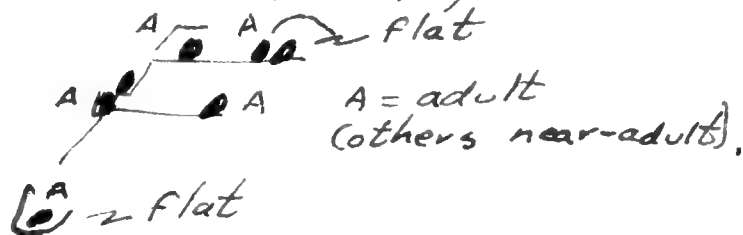
Gymnogyps californianus

April 19, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

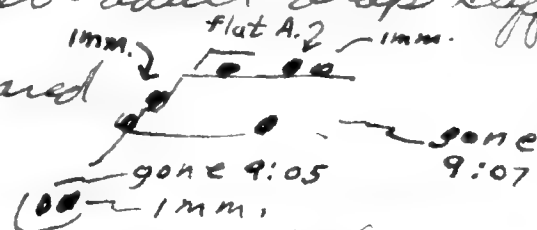
next to cliff, only half spread. An imm. also left Whitewash Ledge & another adult landed there  $1 \pm$  min. later. At 8:34, <sup>5</sup>adults, <sup>1 dark head,</sup> & 2 near-adults on Whitewash Ledge.  8:36, 8:37, the dark head

left. 8:40, one adult <sup>were</sup> summed back. One adult & one near-adult, <sup>one</sup> crouched flat on rock. 8:42, another adult left; ledge appeared:



8:45, adult still on ledge in shade over Big Cove as before, & <sup>a ninth</sup> ~~an eighth~~ bird (near-adult) was atop cliff  $\frac{1}{4} \pm$  mile N. of Big Cove. No wind - faint breeze. adult flattened alongside near-adult pecked at the latter's head occasionally as if affectionately. 8:55, ~~the upper right adult left & (same?) landed next to lowest adult.~~

8:55, a near-adult landed next to the lowest adult, & both stood quietly. One adult ruffled up <sup>its</sup> wings feathers & tail by shaking from side to side. Upper right adult ~~apparently~~ gone; near-adult atop cliff to N. gone (9 a.m.). Ledge appeared



The 2 imm. (near adults) crouched flat. 9:05, one adult flew into a pothole below Whitewash Ledge. Since the 7:20 scare there have been no crows near the pool. 9:10, of the 8 crows visible, 3 are near-adults, others adults.



Gymnogyps californianus

April 14, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

9:15, the 3 imm. left, 30± sec. apart. One remaining adult stretched right wing & leg down & back. The adult over cave on ledge did likewise. 5 adults only condors remaining in sight near Big Cave. 9:20, one imm. (dark head) alighted atop cliff  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile N. of Big Cave. 9:30, 3 adults on Whitewash Ledge (1 crouched flat) occasionally preening, 1 adult in pathole, 1 on ledge over Big Cave (as 2± hrs. ago), 1 dark head atop cliff to N. Violet-green swallows constantly flitting around the perching area - no condor reaction. 9:43, imm. gone from atop cliff to N. of cave. Between 9:45 & 9:50, all but the adult on ledge directly above Big Cave took off, 1 or 2 at a time, occasionally another landing. There were ~~2 or 3~~<sup>1 or 2</sup> in air above horizon before the close birds took off - the condors in air seemed to excite the perched birds. Breeze was light enough to ripple tent blind. The birds did not circle back near cave after leaving but 2 or 3 did alight briefly atop cliff  $\frac{1}{4}$ ± mile N. of the cave. At 9:52 the long perched adult on ledge over the cave took off - none visible perched. We left blind then & saw one adult sunning back atop Roast Tree. Ed took pictures of this & flushed the bird by approaching within about 100 yds. & saw 6 circling above N. Ridge, & 2 working their way N. that direction at 10 a.m. We were in the open





Gymnogyps californianus

April 14, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

and moving about within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of these last 2, but they did not investigate us. Rising time - 9:50. Temp. 60°F. in blind, clear sky, light breeze. We prepared to leave Big Cave area & collapsed the tent blind. The sand around the bathing pool was a solid interlaced mass of tracks for about 70 ft. from falls brink. Water was clear & sweet & running over the falls. The primary, which had been such a "toy" had about  $\frac{1}{8}$  of barbs cut, pulled, or broken off, & the shaft was crushed in several places. Pulled up grass was evident on the green grassy spots near pool. At 10:50 when we were still at pool, one adult came over, circling & passed 150±' above us, & an imm. (dark head) came in about 20 ft. over us as if to land, suddenly saw us & started flapping violently, & flew on up Condor Canyon & over the ridge to East Canyon. At 11:15 we were about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile N. of Big Cave & we saw two imm. spiral in to land on or near Whitewash Ledge. Ed whistled loudly a number of times and after 3± minutes the two took off & circled over the brush below us (we atop cliff) before heading toward North Slope. We continued on & arrived at car about 12:15. At the horse carcass then I saw ravens but no condors - a little later I saw 2 golden eagles being chased from the horse vicinity by ravens. & We lunched, then drove toward Parking Place. Met a group of 5± picnickers at Old Cabin. Sid Peyton had also been up to look



Gymnogyps californianus

April 14, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Calif.

for a duck hawk nest at Whiteside Pk.. Later he told me he had seen several condors circling close when near the peak & had found a coyote in one of Herman Keener's lion traps. At 1:30 we arrived at Parking Place & saw one adult perched atop the dead tree 60±' from road in head of Parking Canyon. <sup>air still & hazy - fog forming in distance.</sup> I walked down the road past this bird without flushing it, walking at an incautious pace. The adult looked me over but did not turn toward road or raise wings. I stood about 100 ft. from adult & talked loudly to Ed, some 100± yds. up the road - the adult then took off (Ed photoed it) and soared directly to the highest dead P.s. on a steep ridge  $\frac{3}{4}$ ± mile to SW, and at 300±' lower elevation. Ed & I drove down Pole Canyon.

April 15, 1946

San Diego, Calif.

With Ed Harrison visited Carall DeWilton Scott at his home at 2600 Camino Pradera near La Jolla. Scott gave me a 105 page manuscript written by himself called "Looking for Condors". This book was written mainly for personal use & not for publication. It contains all of Mr. Scott's notes, speculations, ideas, & poems about the condor plus information from correspondence and publications. Preliminary perusal revealed many excellent notes & ideas. Scott conducted a fairly thorough



Gymnogyps californianus

April 15, 1946

San Diego, Calif.

investigation of the San Pedro Martir some years ago and came to the conclusion that only 1 or 2 condors were present at best though formerly many. Scott came to this region in 1884 when 4 years old so is well qualified to judge the changes that have occurred in vegetation & wildlife. He has a collection of Indian relics & testifies as to the many hours he has spent afield in San Diego county. Scott was of course very friendly to me & is extremely deeply interested in conversation of all kinds.

Ed Harrison told me that he had taken about 20 trips to Cuyama Valley with Pemberton in trying to get condor feeding photos. On one occasion they picked up jack rabbits alongside the road & piled them about the carcass - this was the day when the condors "took the sheep". The birds also ate the jack rabbits with considerable relish. At Encinitas I viewed some of Harrison's condor movies. Of special interest was a fine photo of a soaking wet condor walking from the pool atop Big Cave & shaking up its wings. There were some shots of sunning on Whitewash Ledge too. One sequence showed an adult perched atop a Ps. near #2 nest with 3 turkey vultures



Gymnogyps californianus

April 15, 1946

Encinitas, Calif.

perched within a few feet. There were some class types of condor adult heads at the Whiteacre Pk. nest - these showed the bulging cheeks of one well; a constant character separating the pair at this nest? It is believed by Harrison that Pemberton's pictures have been shown so much that people are tired of condor movies, & Ed believes he will give his to some <sup>eventually</sup> museum for permanent record. Back to Scott: re Lower Calif. he believed Melling Ranch & Santa Rosa Meadows the localities of most reported occurrences. He believed it peculiar that condors were seen only in the high country there while they fed on the low plains in California.

April 17, 1946

San Diego, Calif.

With Ed Harrison I visited Mrs. Griffing Bancroft who has done considerable collecting in Lower California and has a good memory. One occasion they were with Tony Green of the San Diego museum and had a permit to collect a condor. They were camped at La Cucantada about 50 miles beyond Melling Ranch in about June of 1931. They killed a horse which had a broken foot for bait & watched it. There was a <sup>carcass</sup> cow at the other end of the meadow. This place was at about 6000' elevation. One



One. - 6000 - 11000 top. steep E side

narrow. Rem. to left side. 1. west T. bar.

Killed here. Our friend. About 2000. - here

part. - now 1 - and. 10000 - one now -

no time; leaving 2000 ft. Now 2 more

with long run over a left. Mr. Melling

read some down & lost with 10000 ft

with. & some black down there. At June '31.

heard of only 1 or 2 local people.

Gymnogyps californianus

April 17, 1946

San Diego, Calif.

day they were at a horse meadow nearby at about 8000' elevation when they saw one condor soar past. Mr. Bancroft had a 5x7 Graflex but could not get it into action fast enough to get a picture. This condor circled about 1000' over the cow carcass. Their time ran out & they had to leave - as they were leaving (about 2 days after above instance) they saw 2 condors circling with buzzards over the cow. Later Mr. Melling so told them 2 condors came & fed on the cow carcass several different days. The birds fed until they could hardly fly & a cowboy said he approached & "almost caught" one. By questioning the Bancrofts concluded that the condors were only seen at the higher levels - never as low as Melling Ranch (about 2500') and never more than 1 or 2 birds. The mountain tops here were 11 or 12,000 ft. & snow-capped. The San Pedro Martin range is narrow, steep on the E. side & gradual on the W., Mrs. B. said. She so said she expected to see Mrs. Melling soon & would ask her about the condor situation & give me the info.

April 18, 1946

Escondido, Calif.

Talked with Jim Dixon Hanson at Escondido Mutual Water Co. (asst. to Jim Dixon). Hanson lent me a water company key for use today in visiting the San Luis Rey condor nesting area. He told me



Gymnogyps californianus

April 18, 1946

San Diego Co., Calif.

that Fred Ballup of Escondido, a collector of eggs, had said that he had heard reports from different sources of condors being seen in the Julian area. Perhaps near Banner Grade, Hanson & Harrison thought likely. Ed & I drove to Rincon, thence toward Lake Menshau up Cuca Grade until about 2 miles beyond the Palomar Mtn. road (new) and  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile beyond the Mendenhall Ranch house. There we turned off to the S. thru a locked gate and drove about 2 miles to road's end at caretaker's house at dam on San Luis Rey River. The old condor nest area was on S. side of river atop the crest  $500 \pm'$  above river, supposedly. In that area were many huge granite boulders interspersed in the brush & a few lone conifers (~~to~~ apparently would be suitable for roosting). There was a waterfall  $200 \pm'$  above river opposite the caretaker's shack - a condor could water ~~above~~ <sup>at its</sup> top it appeared. Further down the canyon were other large rounded granite outcroppings along the river. We hiked about 2 miles downstream along the flume, took a few pictures of the outcroppings & terrain, then returned up the canyon. Good condor nesting area, it appeared. One could look up the canyon & see Palomar Mtn. with its many conifers (possible roasts of gold). We returned to road & drove to Pala, Barro, Ocean



Gymnogyps californianus

April 18, 1946

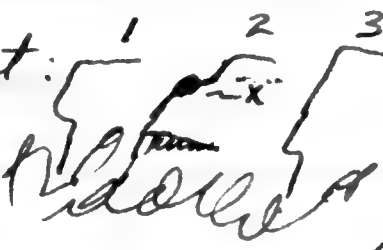
San Diego Co., Calif.

side, & back to Encinitas (starting point). This day we saw comparatively few cattle - most on Mendenhall Ranch it appeared. For condors I believe the food situation here would be tight if they had to depend on ~~cattle~~ domestic animals. Questioned Mr. Wolf, the caretaker at the canal, re condors, showing him photographs. He had seen none, he said - he had seen eagles however & told us of a nest location which proved out.

April 21, 1946 (Easter)

Seespe Canyon, Calif.

At 6:30 a.m. left my car at Van Trees gate & hiked up the Big Seespe. Arrived atop the oil derrick at Oil Well Point at 8:55. At 8:35, from the trail, I had seen one imm. condor atop a high rock point about 200 yds. W. of the 1940 nest site. This bird was still there at 9:15 & appeared to be a 1945 youngster. At about 8:45 I saw a second condor (?) atop a rock point about 200 yds. E. of the old nest site; this bird was gone by 8:55. The area I watched particularly consisted of 3 or 4 rock outcroppings of red Seespe sandstone about 700' above stream bed and  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile E. of it near foot of the canyon which runs to Sulphur Pk. (4 on S. side) from Oil Well Point. The outcroppings appeared

about:  and were surrounded

by heavy brush. The #2 outcropping had lost

50 - 1 E, 1 NW, sum off.

53 - 2000 Run to NE

56 - sum off. here - pr in last pole

Gymnogyps californianus

April 21, 1946

Seespe Canyon, Cal. A.

much of its whitewash at the center crack, but a ~~higher~~ higher point appeared freshly whitened ("x" on diagram). A roughly similar outcropping  $\frac{1}{4} \pm$  mile further toward Sulphur Pk. had a few whitewashed points also. By 9 a.m., sky clear, fair wind up Seespe Canyon. Only conspicuous whitewash on the cliffs to E. of the Seespe was a ledge about 200 yds. NW. of the high falls and  $30 \pm'$  down from top of the  $150 \pm'$  sheer cliff (ledge protected by overhang above). Saw no condors on whitewashed points further down the canyon this morning. The actions of the immature I watched should be typical of a one <sup>year</sup> ~~year~~ old bird. 9:31, I saw one condor circling low about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile S. of Sulphur Pk. It gradually rose to 1000' or more, then headed E. in a long glide at 9:50. Another headed NW about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile S.W. of Sulphur Pk. at 9:50. The immature had occasionally preened. At 9:50 it took off, circled over the S. facing slope, & rose above the horizon at 9:55. At 9:53, two others circled above the ridge about 1 mile W. of Sulphur Pk. - they worked toward the peak,  $100 \pm'$  above the brush, then headed E. SE passing  $\frac{1}{4} \pm$  mile SW of the peak (10:00 a.m.). At 10:03 I saw another - probably the imm. - following a similar route to SE. S. breeze continues - circling



N: 42 - 2nd dot. Greenest. Hummed Green  
Ruffled up. Ygt #3 pr. out. Dark green. 48.

Gymnogyps californianus

April 21, 1946

Seespe Canyon, Cal. F.

to gain altitude has obviously been above S. slopes. The falls at Oil Well Pt. was running <sup>well</sup> ~~good~~ - it should be a good drinking place for condors. On the bluffs near top of Sulphur Pk., 2 or 3 well white-washed ledges are visible - maybe not condor perches. 10:30, two condors spiraled down, wings flexed, feet down, & landed atop a <sup>rocky</sup> bluff 50± yds. S. of lip of the falls. At least one was adult. They alighted 10± sec. apart, <sup>an</sup> adult first, the adult remaining in my view but other hidden beyond it. The adult's perch & other rocks near falls top were apparently not whitewashed at all, so probably not a frequent perch. 10:38 - adult gone; could not relocate. Perhaps it dropped down to water, or perhaps soared toward Bear Heaven. 10:42, I saw 3 circling above Sulphur Pk. - they rose to 1000± above it, then I lost them. From 11:00 to 11:15 I ~~watched~~ watched one circling about ½ mile S. of mouth of West Fork - this bird made little change in altitude or location during this time; at 11:15 it glided W. At 11:15 I saw one circling near the bluffs just W. of Sulphur Pk., its shadow crossing the cliffs several times. At 11:20 this one headed SE. ~~from~~ Fair S. wind continued. 11:42, I saw two on the skyline atop a boulder at top of falls to SW of oil derrick. Apparently this was the



Gymnogyps californianus

April 21, 1946

Sespe Canyon, Calif.

adult & imm. I saw land near there earlier today. Now the birds appeared wet. They preened, beat their wings in the air  $5 \pm$  times in succession ( $5$  times in  $2$  seconds), & sunned backs with wings spread. The imm. had #3 left primary <sup>adult shook up its wings once.</sup> missing. Both were sunning backs at 11:48. 11:49, adult flapped to behind a bush, out of my sight. Imm. continued to sun (sunning at 11:55. This is my first evidence of bathing at this location. The 2 brothers + 3 seen soaring = at least 5 total seen today. 12:05, the imm. gave  $3 \pm$  flaps, then sunned back & wings again, preening underparts at same time. 12:15, the imm. preening at same perch. 12:35, still preening. Birds which spend so much time bathing & preening can hardly find food daily, - or be very hungry. 12:39, the imm. retired out of sight. No action seen then until 3:20 when an imm. crossed northward near foot of the canyon leading to Sulphur Pk. This imm. circled & slowly worked up the slope, going N., until about 1000' above the ridge (3:29) - then another (adult?) circled with it for  $2 \pm$  minutes and one (the second?) headed NW in a long glide. The <sup>imm.</sup> other soared  $1 \pm$  mile W., then circling  $200 \pm$ ' above the brush worked back toward Sulphur Pk. At one time 5 turkey vultures circled within 200'



Gymnogyps californianus

April 21, 1946

Seaspe Canyon, Calif.

above this condor. The bird glided SW & passed about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile W. of Sulphur Pk. (3:45), then resumed circling. This bird had a missing #3 <sup>or 4</sup> primary in each wing - perhaps the imm. I saw after bathing today. 3:55, this bird still circling - at about 500';  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile S. of Sulphur Pk.; close to 5 circling turkey vultures. The turkey vultures circled about twice as fast as the condor. 3:57, the condor was at 1000' altitude; it headed W., turned one circle at two points, & passed 2000' above me at 4 p.m., then turned back toward Sulphur Pk., feet down. Then circled about 500' above brush  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile SW of Sulphur Pk., feet up (4:04). It occurs to me that it is much more common to see a lone imm. than a lone adult. It appears that there is no condor nest this year in the canyon, <sup>running</sup> from Oil Well Point to Sulphur Pk.; probably there was last year. 4:10, the imm. circled 100' above the bluffs  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile SW of Sulphur Pk.. I have not seen this bird flap or even dip its wings since 3:20. 4:0 4:13, <sup>I saw</sup> an adult about 500' above the imm., heading SW. toward me in a long glide. 4:15, the adult passed 2000' above me. It wandered a bit, then passed back over me at 4:18, heading E.; the imm. 500' below the adult. The adult glided out of my sight heading E. about 1 mile SW of Sulphur Pk. at 4:21, & the imm. followed about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile behind. Left at 4:30 &



Gymnogyps californianus

April 21, 1946

Seepe Canyon, Calif.

hiked down Seepe Canyon - saw none on the usual perch points along the way.

April 22, 1946

Cuyama Valley, Calif.

With Sidney Peyton Jr. drove from Fillmore to Ojai, thence on the Maricopa road to Cuyama Valley and Cuyama Ranger Station. There I talked with Ranger Boyce and his wife & a boy named Carter. The ranger knew of the condors & had seen some he said - but nothing definite. His wife said she saw one circling over a deer which was being chased by a lion (last year). The boy said he was working near Old Man Mtn. and had seen one or two there occasionally, the last about a week ago (1 bird). All were very much interested in condors & their habits. The ranger said there were no sheep in the Cuyama last year so not many condors. On the road to Cuyama R. S. I was again impressed by the rugged rocks & scattered conifers of the S. side of Pine Mtn. - perhaps there is no roosting concentration there because of distance to food. We drove up the road toward Big Pine Mtn. from the Ballinger Canyon turnoff Road became impassable because of many slides & rocks at the water tank below Choke-





Gymnogyps californianus

April 22, 1946

Big Pine Lookout, Calif.

Cherry Saddle. We left the car & hiked toward the Big Pine Lookout (leaving car 3:40). At 4:15 we were looking at Modolceh O from the SW side. We saw two condors circling 200 ±' above the Modolce Ridge, & 5 ± minutes later they were soaring E. Sky 3/10 cirrus, fair wind earlier today but nil by 4 p.m. We continued on & arrived at Big Pine LO at about 7 p.m. No one had driven beyond so where our car was for weeks or months, but there were a few horse tracks & footprints. The forest had of course been closed during hunting season the last few years. Modolce LO had not been manned in recent years. At Big Pine LO we found a radio log signed Harriet Boyce for periods from June 1 to Oct. 31, 1945 - she <sup>is</sup> the one who supposedly saw a young condor being fed nearby. Fair wind sprang up about 8 p.m.

April 23, 1946

Mission Pine, Calif.

With Sid Peyton Jr. left Big Pine Lookout at 6:35 a.m. & hiked toward Mission Pine. Sky 1/10 cirro-stratus, fair E. wind, moderate temperature. We reached the big pines at head of Falls Canyon at <sup>9:20</sup> 9:30 and sat on the slope looking out over Center Knoll in

12 - 5/10 a at

not

4:26 - 2 - on pt. off m. down arm.

4:35 - 2 (a 3) over Bay P. T. head (about) landward pt.  
<sup>1<sup>st</sup> time, then look.</sup>

4:40 - 2 ad off (oos).

4:45 - 3 abt 1 mile Bay. arm, ~~landward~~ NE end, 600' lar.


4:47 - m off. Out + over 1/2 m. S. rock pt

53.

Gymnogyps californianus

April 23, 1946

Falls Canyon, Calif.

Falls Canyon toward Salisbury Patrons. Below the Big Pine Lookout 3± points <sup>were well</sup> ~~seemed to~~ whitened as if used for condor perches. We saw no whitening or other evidence of condor roosting in the big pines at head of Falls Canyon. By 11:45 we saw no Condors. Went to Cooper Camp for lunch, left there at 12:25 & the big pines at 12:40 heading for Big Pine L.O. about 12:00 sky was 5/10 cirrus & cirro-stratus, & breeze light. Arrived at lookout at 4 p.m., having seen no condors. at 4:25 I saw 2 soaring near the cliffs 1/2± mile W. of the lookout. They circled & rose & at 4:28 perched on a point atop the cliffs. They were <sup>The imm. seemed with wings spread.</sup> an adult & an imm. (with  wing patches). At 4:35 I saw 2 (possibly 3) over the big pines at head of Falls Canyon, above the horizon, circling. I saw another adult land near the perched one (6±' from it). This trio stood quietly together, & at 4:40 the adults left (to where?). At 4:45 I saw 3 about a mile beyond the imm., circling, at 6000±' level. 4:47, the imm. took off, soared 1/2± mile S., circled, & rose well above the horizon (then lost). 4:53, two (of the 3?) circled about 1/2 mile W. of where imm. was perched. 5:00-I could spot none. Fair wind from NE; 65° in lookout; heavy haze in all directions. Perhaps the 2 adults & imm. were a "family" of 1945



Gymnogyps californianus

April 23, 1946 Big Pine Lookout, Calif.  
from this area. Saw no more by dark.

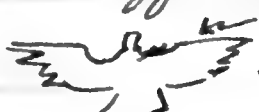
April 24, 1946 Big Pine Lookout, Calif.  
At 7 a.m. sky  $\frac{1}{10}$  cirrus, fair east wind, 60°F.  
Air clear to W. so had good view of San Rafael Mtn.  
& could probably see condors there as well as ~~in~~ near  
the upper big yellow pines in head of Falls Canyon.  
Would spend the morning watching from the lookout.  
At 7:20 I saw a large bird (possible condor) perched on limb of  
a stub on N. side of San Rafael Mtn. - gone at 8 a.m. Saw  
none from the lookout (with constant search) by 10:15.  
Then hiked E. along cliff tops peering down to look for  
condors or whitewash. At 10:25 I saw 2 adults circ-  
ling about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile SW of the lookout. Continued on  
to about 1 mile E. of the lookout; saw 3± points on  
the cliffs or rock points on slopes below to S.  
which appeared to be condor perches. Many perch  
point possibilities, a few conifers for roasts,  
& many potholes & broken cliffs for possible  
nesting sites on S. side of the Big Pine Mtn. ridge.  
At 12:15 saw 2 adults ~~and~~ circling over <sup>the</sup> N.  
slope about 1 mile E. of the lookout; they circled in  
opposite directions & rose until 800±' above top  
of cliffs, then - ?. At 12:45 we were back at the  
lookout - fair NE wind still, 68°F., sky  $\frac{1}{10}$   
cumulus. Watched continually from the lookout  
but saw none until 4:16. Then an adult was seen

7:16 - ad. 1 mi. E  
4:18 - Kansas, face of.

Gymnogyis californianus

April 24, 1946

Big Pine Lookout, Calif.

approaching about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile S. of the cliff point  $1\pm$  mile E.  
 This bird had feet down - it spiraled down <sup>sharply</sup> with wings flexed, twisting to one side then the other by bending the wing tip down (something like plane maneuver called the "falling leaf") and swooped up to a landing on a prominent whitewashed point about 100' below the highest cliff point (landed 4:18). Fair NE wind still, sky  $\frac{1}{10}$  cumulus, increasing haze. The adult occasionally preened. It stood quietly facing the cliff. Some at 4:45. 4:44, adult turned back, wings  + tail spread. Back to sun. 4:46, wings folded again. 4:48, the adult took off & descended very rapidly with wings flexed & feet down, occasionally dipping wings, & at 4:50 disappeared behind a ridge about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile SE and 800 ft. below the lookout level as if to land - this canyon not visible from lookout. At 5 p.m. I left the lookout & went to head of canyon where the condor disappeared - there were  $3\pm$  whitewashed perch points on cliffs down this canyon but I could see no condor. Returned to the lookout.

April 25, 1946

Falls Canyon, Calif.

At 5:25 a.m. I left Big Pine Lookout to hike to Falls Canyon. Fair E. wind, moderate temperature, & clear sky - warmer & less windy than yesterday. I reached the big pines at head of Falls Canyon at 7:40





Gymnogyps californianus

April 25, 1946

Falls Canyon, Calif.

and was at the stream in Dead Oaks Canyon at 8 a.m. -  
soaring conditions fair - light breeze only in canyon.  
There I met a man who was in charge of a 4 man trail  
crew camped there. His name was Witter (or something  
like that). He said they normally worked 10 days &  
then went "out" via South Fork for 4 days. They  
had been in the Sierras for about 2 months but  
had seen very few condors - about 2 maximum at a  
time. He said they saw 2 perched on the rocks upstream  
from the falls recently. Most trail work had been along  
the Sierras as they were waiting for snow to clear. It  
had rained almost all month in December, he said.  
A lion had killed a deer near South Fork Camp & they  
saw a couple (?) of condors circling over where they  
thought the lion had dropped the carcass. I continued  
on. At Bend Cliffs there was a much & freshly (it  
appeared) whitewashed pothole about halfway up the  
cliff on the fallsward side - no whitewash on top or  
on nearby rocks. 2 or 3 of the perch trees in side can-  
yons in the Condor Sanctuary seemed to show some whit-  
ening as if used for perches. At 9:15 I was at the  
brink of the falls. There was a fast stream of clear  
water running. <sup>the</sup> A prominent perch rock about 100 yds.  
SE of falls  $\pm 50'$  above was unwhitened. There was  
neither whitewash nor feathers nor evidence of gross  
pulling in the pool basin, but on a flat ledge  $7'$   
above the water level and  $15'$  N. of it there was about



Gymnogyps californianus

April 25, 1946

Falls Canyon, Calif.

8 square of condor-like whitewash & a fairly well whitened point on cliff edge about 25' W. of falls brink.

Several protected potholes in the main conglomerate cliffs had old stalactites of whitewash still, & 1 point about 100 yds. NE of brink & 15±' above seemed freshly whitewashed. Summing up: - there is still

some use of the falls area for perching, & probably for drinking & bathing, but there are at present only a few condors in the area. I ascribe this lack of condors to lack of food on the Santa Barbara & other Pateros & in Cuyama Valley. Snedden Ranch had many cattle, however, but mainly close to & in the foothills.

Left the falls at 9:50 & hiked back up to trail (10:25) and to Dead Oaka Canyon (11:30). There I met the trail crew of Jim W. -, Duane Woolworth, & - Hurley. Jim had worked as forest guard on Mt.

Abel, <sup>in past years</sup> & had seen grouse there but not condors. For the last 4 years he had been in the Sequoia area around this time of year. He thought he saw more condors here last year than this. Unfortunately he was very loquacious but not much of a condor observer. Woolworth reiterated the story of seeing 2 near the lion kill about two months ago and <sup>2 or</sup> 3 "up above" (on the potero side I judged). He said he saw 2 on the cliffs (my "Bend Cliffs") about 10 days ago. He also said that in May or June of 1942

Woolworth - 2 mos. ago, 2 near Lion Hill.  
May or June '42 - 7 or 8 east n. BP 10 - people  
within a few ft.

No sheep in Cay or Cave for sev yrs.

2 m. Alaman - (wit).

Gymnogyps californianus

April 25, 1946

Falls Canyon, Cal. F.

there was a couple at Big Pine Lookout & a child,  
& that <sup>(7 or 8)</sup> several condors were perched on the rocks  
within a few feet of the lookout & could be approach-  
ed within about 15'. Jim said he had seen two near  
Alamogordo Saddle last year & that they had perched  
on a tree nearby. He also said there had been little  
snow this winter but in '43 (not quite sure) there  
was 5 1/2 feet near Big Pine after one storm. I lunched  
with these men, then left at 1:10 & hiked up the can-  
yon. Fair wind, sky 2/10 cirrus & cumulus. At 1:50  
I left the Big Pines for Big Pine Lookout. Sky became more over-  
cast; 5/10 cirrus & cirro-stratus at 4 p.m., & wind faint or  
nil-increasing haze. Arrived at 4:25 p.m. at Big Pine  
Lookout. Sidney Peyton had seen no condors from there  
all day - he said the air had been there had been a  
W. breeze & considerable haze all day. Saw no more  
condors from lookout this evening. I recall that  
Jim W. told me he believed there were few sheep  
in the Cuyama and none on Carrizo Plains the  
last few years. He said the cattle were usually  
on the Pateros from May to November and  
not in winter.

April 26, 1946

Ventura Co., Cal. F.

Hiked from Big Pine Lookout (departing at 06:30)  
to Chokecherry Saddle & drove down Santa  
Barbara Canyon through Snedden Gate to



Gymnogyps californianus

April 26, 1946

Ventura Co., Calif.

Cuyama Ranger Station & thence to Ojai on Highway 399. Between this road (near Ozena) and the Mt. Pinos group are low eroded hills which do not appear to be good cattle grazing country. This leaves Pine Mtn. rather isolated from any plains grazing country.

April 28, 1946

Kern Co., Calif.

With my uncle G.R. Buckingham of Delano left Delano at about 7:30 a.m. for a plane flight to view some Kern Co. condor areas. We flew ~~west~~<sup>east</sup> to near White River, then skirted the foothills going southward over Kern River power plant and Mt. Adelaide, thence over Caliente to Tehachapi & landed. Left Tehachapi about 0830 & flew over Bear Valley going westward, skirted the west end of Bear Mtn., then headed northward to Walker Pass Basin, thence over Havilah, across Greenhorn Mtns. to near Glennville, thence westward near Blue Mtn. and on to Jamin and Delano (arrived about 10 a.m.). We saw no condors, but saw perhaps 800 cattle between Blue Mtn. & Jamin in the low rolling open country - apparently excellent condor foraging territory. Saw few cattle in other regions traversed.





Gymnogyps californianus

April 28, 1946

Kern Co., Calif.

In eastern Cummings Valley saw perhaps 500 sheep. Bear Mtn. seemed to have many trees suitable for roosting on the N. & especially the west side - conifers, some dead. If condors roosted there, Bear Valley should be a good frequented feeding area. Breckenridge Mtn. has a lookout from which condors should be seen if about (on the Walker Pass side). The Baker Grade area <sup>goes</sup> ~~went~~ through broken oak country & has no probable roasts - But Breckenridge Mtn. has best possibilities there. Blue Mtn. near White River also has a lookout & (a good condor lookout post). The low country of Tejan Ranch & north was very dry - perhaps cattle will be diminished in numbers because of lack of feed this year & thus effect condor food supply.

April 29, 1946

Kern Tulare Co., Calif.

Drove from Delano to Porterville. There talked with Forest Guard Snider (sp.?) who said he had heard of no condors being seen since my last visit. ~~except that~~ He thought he had heard of Walter Greig of White River seeing some. I phoned Ross Welch re condors (game warden). He said he possibly saw one with buzzards near Orange Grove



Gymnogyps californianus

April 29, 1946

Kee Tulare Co, Calif.

about 7 miles E. of Porterville about a week ago. He suggested I visit the Coyote Springs area & get Jim Vincent or Walter Greig to direct me. Phoned Reuben Williams (old sheep rancher) place (512 S. J. St.) but found him not home. Left Porterville about 12:00 on this clear warm day & drove to White River. Avid fan from NV. I saw about 600 Herefords scattered along in the dry grass rolling hills between Porterville & White River & saw 6+ turkey vultures - plenty of prospective condor food. At White River I talked with Mrs. Greig who runs the phone switchboard. She had some interest in watching turkey vultures & other birds. She knew condors had white under their wings & said that 2 perched frequently on the rock outcroppings of a smooth grassy hill about 1 mile E. of White River. She thought they nested there because 2 were around all year from March 1 (1945) when the Greigs came there. She said they soared W. in the morning and E. in the evening. Two of her children climbed up there one day & were frightened by the birds because they did not fly off when approached. The children ~~supposed~~ were well acquainted with buzzards she said & these birds were much bigger. She did not know about the



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Gymnogyps californianus

April 29, 1946

Tulare Co., Calif.

orange head, however. She said she & her husband had talked about the condors but that she had seen them most as she was he was seldom at home in the daytime. ~~They knew~~ They knew about the condor Vincent had found. The hill where Mrs. Grieg had seen the "condors" did not appear to have suitable nesting sites - Blue Mtn., 3± miles to SE, had <sup>many</sup> rough cliffs which seemed like good nesting area, however. Retragessing: Walsh said the condor "came in" about this time of year. Mrs. Grieg directed me to Marvin Vincent's place on the lower Vincent Ranch - to W. of the White River to Woody road about 3 miles from White River. I found Vincent at home. He said the ranch was about 17,000 acres with 1700 head of cattle. He had been in the area 26 years & on the lower ranch for 19. About Every year or two they saw condors - or "Vultures" as he so knew them. He said they always seemed to come from the N. & depart toward the south. He recalls having seen none in winter or spring, & most in late summer. About 17 years ago they had many squirrels & poisoned many - condors ate the poisoned squirrels he said (about 17 flushed on one occasion). The Coyote Springs episode he again related. There was a steer dead there -



Gymnogyps californianus

April 29, 1946

Kern Co., Cal. F.

about 36 hours dead - but untouched. The birds may have been after the water. Many hit the fence wires (3 + 4 strands of barbed wire). They galloped along, flapping their wings heavily, to take off. This spring is in open grassland but ~~there~~ in low rolling hills - the water is covered by "willows" to a large extent. The spring first lies about 1/2 mile N. of the Quinn-Woody road & about 3 miles W. of Isham Hill. There were 34 or 35 crows present - the most Vincent had ever seen. About 4 to 6 weeks before this incident Vincent killed a coyote about a mile from the house. Later the same day his children flushed 20 crows from the vicinity, they told him; & the ribs, legs, & skull <sup>had been</sup> ~~were~~ consumed. Vincent said he had killed 38 mtn. mountain lions in the back country. Deer were almost absent in the lower scattered-oak country but there were some back toward the brush line (about 3 miles E.). Vincent's father, H. G. V., was not too observant or interested in wildlife, Marion said. He said there were probably slightly fewer cattle in this area now than 20 years ago. <sup>many years</sup> ~~years~~ ago there had been <sup>many</sup> ~~some~~ sheep in the low country, & some (perhaps 2000) ~~soot~~ in





Gymnogyps californianus

April 29, 1946

Kern Co., Calif.

the last 4 or 5 years (Quinn Ranch for one place). Marion said the Coyote Springs area was apparently one of the most frequent for condors. I could not locate the spring from Marion's directions, but this "Lamer Vincent Ranch" had a few scattered oaks but was mainly rolling oak-covered dry hills. There were two high tension power lines in the area - possible condor hazards. I found a steer carcass 2+ weeks old but no condor evidence near it. Seemingly condor movement to this area in fall would indicate food shortage elsewhere, but except for sheep in some areas, potential condor food is constant as to location (tho perhaps greater mortality in winter). G.R. Buckingham of Delano said he believed the Quinn Ranch had been sold & that it was now in wheat instead of sheep - this tendency, if general, would decrease condor food supply.

April 30, 1946

Kern Co., Calif.

With my uncle G.R. Buckingham of Delano flew in search of condors. Left Delano at 9:45 & flew over Lost Hills to E. edge of the Tumbler Range, thence southward at about 2000' altitude over the foothills - over Cameros Rocks & other rocks, & over several hundred head of cattle - past Fellows & McKittrick.



Gymnogyps californianus

April 30, 1946

Kern Co., Calif.

thence to Taft and landed at 10:45. Then returned to Delano over Butterwillow, Shafter, & Wasco. We saw no condors but a few buzzards - saw no carcasses. Apparently these rolling treeless cattle covered foothills are favorable for condor feeding grounds. Near McKittrick the cattle gave way to grain & oil wells ~~for~~ to a large extent. Sky clear, light breeze at surface, air moderately lumpy <sup>on</sup> in the morning flight. Later in the day talked with Ranger Cron at Porterville. He said he had been told of condors near White River by Walter Isenig (husband of telephone operator there) and had seen them soaring high overhead there. He identified them by the white patches under the wings & believes his identification unmistakable. Cron seems very genuinely interested in condors. Saw many cattle between Porterville & Springville among the grassy hills (many rough rock outcroppings too).

May 2, 1946

Kern Co., Calif.

To get a look at the squirrel country east of Famoso, I left Delano at about 8 a.m., drove to McFarland, thence east about 8 miles, thence south toward Bakerfield. About 4 miles east



Gymnogeomys californicus

May 2, 1946

Kern Co., Calif.

of McFarland I hit the uncultivated squirrel <sup>area</sup> country. The hills were dry, gently rolling, treeless & brushless, & apparently unused by stock. I could see several squirrels in any direction. This type of ground continued until east of Famoso, then oil development encroached. Apparently much more "squirrel country" to eastward. I saw perhaps 20 turkey vultures 1 or 2 at a time, & at one squirrel carcass. Saw one "poison out" sign east of Famoso. Continued on to Bakersfield. Found Bufort Fox not in, but <sup>as</sup> the man mixing poisoned ~~oats~~ oats said that poisoning was now going on in the Peco Creek district east of Famoso. I then went to visit Ranger Dick Droege (Greenhorn District) at 315 Haherfelde Bldg. He had never seen a condor but had heard of them. He ~~recalled~~ <sup>having</sup> ~~seeing~~ a condor-reporting form sent to him some years ago but he had filed it as something not to be bothered with. He was very interested in the pictures I showed him, however, & asked many intelligent questions. The Oak Flat Look-out would be posted May 16 and Breckenridge Mtn. L.O. on June 1 - he would be glad to furnish these with any photos or information I could send him. He said there were about 3000



Gymnogyps californianus

May 2, 1946

Kern Co., Calif.  
of Sequoia Natl Forest

head of cattle on his district, but he knew of no sheep. I left Bakersfield about noon & drove northward on the Porterfield road which runs about 7 miles E. of Famoso, turned eastward up Little Creek for about 5 miles. There I examined about 8 sheep carcasses of apparently several months vintage. Some had apparently dried up in most part, & about half <sup>of the carcasses</sup> had been partially consumed by coyotes, but saw no evidence of crows. Later examined 2 more old sheep carcasses - carnivores again but no crow evidence. Saw no ravens at all in this area. From 12:45 to 2:30 I prowled about the dry rolling hills - squirrels were absent from many sections as if poisoned. Saw 30+ turkey vultures, 1 golden eagle, & 10+ broad-winged hawks in the vicinity. Could not find the poisoning party. Drove northward toward Porterville again, then west to <sup>McFarland</sup> ~~Delano~~ and to Delano via <sup>Jasmin</sup> ~~the~~ ~~Poom~~ - ~~Woody~~ road. Sky 5/10 cirro-stratus, fair breeze.

May 3, 1946

Bakersfield, Calif.

Drove from Delano to Bakersfield & there talked with Bufort Fox and Joe Keyes. Fox had heard of no crows being seen E. of Famoso - nor Keyes - but both were sure they would be there soon. Keyes had been





10:32 - 10:35

10:35

10:35 - 10:40

10:32 - 10:35

Gymnogyps californianus

May 3, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

visiting the squirrel areas east of Delano, McFarland, & Famoso since thallium was first used, about 1926. He had seen condors there during the poisoning, & seen the condors & turkey vultures eating the poisoned squirrels, every year. The most condors he ever saw at once was 17, & of these 7 were immatures (1945). Joe said up to 16 buzzards roosted in dead trees on Poso Creek about 1/2 mile upstream from the Porterville road, last year, & over 100 in some preceding years. He had examined these roasts & found no dead or sick buzzards, in spite of the fact that they ate poisoned squirrels. Joe said the condors usually appeared about 10 a.m. and were gone by 4 or 4:30 p.m. He had no guess or information as to where they came from or where they went. Joe said the condors first appeared about May 20 of last year. At first one day he saw one, ~~then~~ the next 3, then 5, 7, 12, & up to 17 - in other words, they came in gradually. One time Joe shot about 6 cottontails & laid them out in natural fashion near an old wooden shack near where he had seen condors feed. Joe got in the shack about 8 a.m. The condors came & ate the rabbits & Joe got some photos of them with buzzards standing by. The photos were taken from with a small camera & the prints blown up, but the adult condors were un-



Gymnogyps californianus

May 3, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

mistakable (I saw the pictures). Maximum number of condors in photo was 2 or 3. Joe said that buzzards & condors eat the membrane but not the digestive tract of the poisoned squirrels; he believes they would be poisoned only if they ate this. Coyotes & bobcats are killed easily by secondary poisoning, Joe said, but apparently not birds. The buzzards give way to the condors & stand around in a circle while condors are feeding, Joe said. Occasionally a condor snaps at a buzzard with bill. Condors can be approached quite close in a car - to within about 40' at times, says Joe. Sometimes they will fly a short ways carrying the squirrel in their bill rather than relinquish it, said Joe - buzzards do this too. The buzzards often stand around & sun their backs with wings out but Joe has not seen condors do this. The "triangle" formed by the Bakersfield-Porterville, McFarland-Woody, & Famoso-Woody highways has been the most frequented condor area, ~~below~~ says Joe. Once, Joe says, he flushed a condor & a golden eagle from a carcass at Poco Flat. Once, with Everett Horn, he saw condors feeding on a calf on Tegan Ranch before squirrel poisoning season. He said he had seen condors feed on sheep & cattle but mostly on squirrels - he thinks they especially like them. The condors follow 1 or 2 days

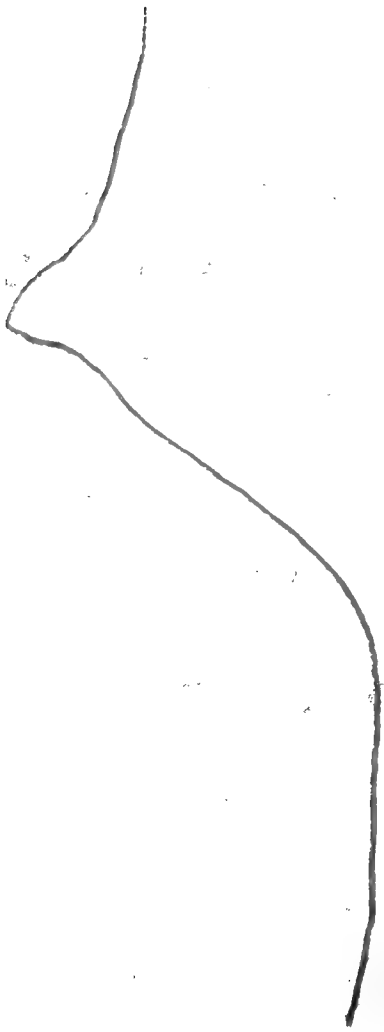
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Gymnogyps californianus

May 3, 1946

N. Famoso, Calif.

after the poison crew, Joe said, & buzzards too. He has seen buzzards eat dried up carcasses 2 or 3 weeks old, however. His opinion of takeoff distance was about 30 ft., but he said the wings were held out & not flopped during the takeoff run (wrong!). Joe said condors seemed to wait 5 or 10 minutes after landing before commencing to eat as if not noticing the food - I believe Joe got this idea from his blind experience. He said the condor about 70' away - did not seem to mind the camera click. Both condors & buzzards seem to prefer fresh meat, Joe said. One of his photos shows adult condor with one foot on squirrel or rabbit & pulling with bill. Condors are more wary than buzzards, Joe believes. Joe thought he had heard of one being reported found dead in a horse trough a few years ago but couldn't recall where he had heard the story. Joe had never seen condors on the W. side of San Joaquin Valley. Fox said that the whole Santa Maria Valley had been poisoned & that work was being done <sup>on Carrizo</sup> ~~near Red Rock~~ Plains too. ~~Back on~~ <sup>on</sup> Finis Bradshaw, who gave me some condor tips before, now works near Arnette. One county man said a man named Douglas working in the Tejon foothills near El Paso Creek, reported seeing 3 condors one day & 2 the next about a week ago (may not know condors, the informant thought). There <sup>are</sup> ~~were~~ many buzzards about 2 miles E. of Kern Co. Park where



Gymnogyps californianus

May 3, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

squirrels are being poisoned, said the same man. Another poisoning party is working about 3 miles SW of Mt. Paso. Joe said that when he first noted condors feeding on poisoned squirrels he was worried about the possible effect, but he had seen nothing to indicate any bad effects on the birds, & 17 (1945 figure) was the most he had ever seen. I drove then to Famoso and E. to Rexroth Corner (Rexroth brother's ranch), arriving at <sup>10:30</sup>~~10:45~~ a.m. At 10:32 I saw 2 condors soaring about 1 mile NE of the Corner, & at 10:39 made out 9. One adult soared 300±' over me. I drove to about 1½ miles NE of the Corner & at 10:57 saw 8 total, 2 being perched on a dry grass gentle slope with 3 turkey vultures close by them. The rolling hills were perhaps 60' from bottom to crest so that even in the "valleys" the condors had good takeoff country. At a group of squirrel holes I then saw 3 adults & 1 imm. with 3 buzzards standing near, on 5% slope. Another imm. stood 75± yds. to E. ~~at~~; ~~it~~ joined the group. At 11:10 one adult landed about 200 yds. W. of the group & 2 buzzards there took off as the condor landed. To take off the condors ran with body horizontal & wings flapping & feet galloping, one striding shortly after the other. One bird landed & ran about 6 steps in stopping on the near level ground. At ~~11~~ I was in my





Gymnogyps californianus

May 3, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

car about 200 yds. from these birds & may have disturbed them. 11:13, I counted 13 - 1 adult & 1 imm. were still at the near squirrel hole & 5 $\pm$  were with buzzards 2 $\pm$  miles to E. The imm. took off galloping with both feet nearly simultaneously & flapping 15 times, then flap-glided 300 $\pm$  yds. & alighted near 2 buzzards. The adult followed and landed about 100' from imm. At 11:18 the 2 buzzards <sup>& refilled</sup> flew off. The adult pulled at the squirrel with bill several times, holding it down with 1 or both feet. The 2 buzzards stood 10 $\pm$ ' behind adult, quietly. At 11:24 the imm. still stood quietly on the slope 100 $\pm$ ' from adult. The location of these birds was 8 miles E. & 2 miles N. of Famoso. Another condor - a near-adult - stood 100 $\pm$  yds. to S. of my car, its neck bulging & "crop" skin just showing, standing & looking about. The imm. had pink color ventrally on neck above ruff. 11:32 The feeding adult took off about 11:28 & by 11:30 there were 5 buzzards standing at that spot. 11:32, there were 4 soaring very slowly about 1 mile to E., one with feet down, at 400 $\pm$ ' altitude. These birds were in flap-gliding position heading NW<sup>+</sup> into the wind as if "tacking". 11:34, the nearby perched condors & buzzards took off & circled together, rising. Two buzzards remained perched 1/4 $\pm$  mile N. of me, & at 11:38 an adult spiraled in and landed 10 $\pm$ ' from the buzzards. The buzzards



Gymnogyps californianus

May 3, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

remained but flapped off  $20 \pm'$  as a second adult landed beside the first (11:39), then walked back toward adults as the latter each tugged at a squirrel (11:41). The adults seemed to step on the squirrel with one foot, then the other, then pull with tip of bill. Each adult took  $5 \pm$  tugs, then stood quietly, then took off one at a time (11:43). One took 3 hops before off, and 9 flaps before the first glide. Both took off to S. (downhill 5%, wind NW) leaving the 2 buzzards. 11:47, I saw 7 in air scattered about 1 mile & up to  $400 \pm'$  altitude. 11:50, 12 in view, some having apparently risen from about 1 mile SE of me behind a hump. There was a fair, steady, NW breeze. 11:52, 13 condors & 3 buzzards whirled in a column from 50' to 500' altitude about 1 mile SE of me. 11:58, 6 of these tacked slowly NW near me. 11:59, I saw one drop down as if to alight about 1 mile SE of me. 12:00, 1 adult soared overhead, 2 about 1 mile to E., & 3 about 1 mile to SE - soaring very slowly, wings flapped. One bird had 1 or 2 rectrices missing; another ~~se~~ battered wings & tail. One might time condor speed here by timing a condor shadow as it passes 2 successive telephone posts. There was a high tension power line (Edison) about 2 miles to E., the Paso oil wells about 2 miles to S. 12:05, two flap-glided up



Gymnogyps californianus

May 3, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

a draw about 1 mile SE of me - 13 flaps maximum, 2 flaps per second or slightly faster (perhaps 10 per second). 12:06, 7 condors with 4 turkey vultures circled about 1 mile to SE. Wind about 20 mph from NW, 76°F, sky clear. 12:13, 9 condors + 3 buzzards about 1 mile E. of me (1 of these was about 1 mile SE of me + at 1000±'). General comments: <sup>They</sup> search for food at moderate altitudes, about 100' to 300' usually. In many cases the condors land where there are buzzards, + the buzzards give way - do condors let buzzards find their food for them? The condors split up into 1's, 2's, 3's, + 4's, rather than staying + feeding together - two groups may be 2 miles apart. Bear Mtn., a possible roost, is 30 miles from this spot. Greenhorn Mountain or Breckenridge Mtn. have trees suitable for roosting at a lesser distance. <sup>Some</sup> Many squirrels outside of holes remained untouched - these were bloated + stinking + supposedly would be eaten eventually. I required about 15 minutes search per carcass found. Re Joe Keyes: he was very willing to give information + nearly all proved accurate + unstretched; he was very friendly + talkative with me + but I did not mention "Audubon".



Gymnogyps californianus

May 3, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

12:20, I saw 4 circling with turkey vultures at up to 300' altitude about 1 mile to S., & one about 1 mile to NE. ~~to~~ I drove to a hilltop about 1/2 mile E. of the first. From there at 12:40 I saw 6 condors in air & at least 3 on the ground (2 at one spot, one 1/4  $\pm$  mile distant). There were at least 3 turkey vultures within 20' of the two condors. Heat waves interfered greatly with vision. I saw another condor go down as if to land in a canyon 1/2  $\pm$  mile N. of the two. I watched the two - at 12:45 ~~there~~ <sup>condor</sup> were 6 turkey vultures near them. One ran a few steps with wings up - 4 turkey vultures took off but landed 10  $\pm$ ' from condor when it stopped. The other condor walked fast toward a standing buzzard - the latter took off when condor 10  $\pm$ ' away. 12:50 the two condors stood together; they wrestled with their heads, one bird forcing the other back. Over the condors whorled 5 other condors & 12  $\pm$  turkey vultures - at 12:54 the condors took off & joined the bunch. About 1 mile SW of there about 3 others circled. 12:55 - the lone perched condor also gave. In the low whirling groups the condors were mixed in with the vultures - no separation. 1:00, I saw 4 condors in quick succession drop into a hollow about 3/4 mile NE of Rex - Corner, & a buzzard leave the hollow, flapping. 1:03, I saw 5 condors low over that spot as





Gymnogyps californianus

May 3, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

if they had just taken off. Little Creek, which contains clear running water & is lined at spots with green grass, runs through this feeding area (the 2 with buzzards were  $60 \pm'$  from it). 1:09, I saw 4 condors standing together on the flat of a valley - one took off to NW & a buzzard landed  $20 \pm'$  away from them. These birds were about 1 mile S. of the Famoso-Woody road & within vision of it. 1:12, one of the group dived toward the buzzard - the buzzard flapped away. 1:13, one of the 3 left. 1:14, a second left, taking off into the wind (NW) with 14 flaps. 1:15, the 3rd. off, also to NW. 1:16, I saw at least 5 in air, & about 12 turkey vultures, scattered for about 1 mile & up to  $500 \pm'$  altitude. I investigated ~~on~~ <sup>the</sup> spot where I first saw condors feeding this morning. There was a very maggoty squirrel in the hole,  $6 \pm'$  from top of ground. It had head skinned & <sup>some</sup> other body areas peeled. I pulled a leg - it pulled off easily because of rotteness. I visited the spot where I had seen the 2 condors with several buzzards near Little Creek - the ~~spot~~ <sup>birds</sup> proved to be about 15' from creek &  $200 \pm$  yds. from road at closest point. I could find no squirrel remains but a strong stench of rotten squirrel came from at least one hole (sense of smell evidence?). I drove down ~~to~~ Little Creek east of the Porterville road. I stopped



Gymnogyps californianus

May 3, 1946

N. Famoso, Calif.

to check on what some buzzards were feeding on, & 4 condors flushed from a side canyon about 800 yds. ahead of me (my disturbance probably). The last took off about 1 minute after the others. Breeze was now light only. I stayed in the car - at 1:55 only one condor remained in sight, about 800' over the area where the 4 were, & it wandered slowly E. in an aimless manner ( $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile E. of me at 2 p.m.). 2:03, 2 appeared from W. at about 300' altitude; and I saw one go down behind a hump  $1 \pm$  mile to NE & a buzzard come flapping up from that area. 2:15, I saw 3 with about 15 buzzards circling about 1 mile SE of Res-Corner. 2:18, I saw a condor with 4 buzzards in the grain field just SE of Res-Corner - this bird took 30 successive flaps in heading N. up a draw without apparently gaining altitude. I went to about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile E. of that area & saw a condor standing near 3 turkey vultures in the rather sparse grain field. at 2:25 this bird took off with 27 flaps. The flapping ceased when bird had turned  $180^\circ$  from its takeoff run direction (to NW) and was  $15 \pm'$  above the ground. There was a  $3 \pm$  second pause, then 5 flaps. The buzzards remained perched. The adult had pecked at the ground area as if feeding. Breeze fair at times, light at times, from NW. 2:30, I saw one condor & 9 turkey vultures



Cymnogyys californicus

May 3, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

circling over the grain field. At 2:55 I saw at least 2 on the ground on a hill & possibly 3 circling over about 2 miles E. of Rex-Corner. I drove about 1½ miles E. of Rex-Corner & saw 2 condors at 3 p.m., at about 200' altitude, circling near hayyards over the N. slope of ridge S. of (& parallel to) the road. One, an adult with #14 & (about) right primaries missing, worked westward, & was along the ridge & was about 1 mile west of its 3 p.m. position at 3:10. I talked again with Joe Keyes & a county agriculture man who was showing him around. They had seen a condor near Paso Creek at about 2:15. Joe said the latest he saw them last year was 5 p.m. (daylight saving). The county man said that the eastern boundary of the poisoning was the Edison power line about 3 miles east of the Porterville road. At present they were poisoning on the Famoso side of the Porterville road NW of Rex-roth Corner. The area to S. of the Famoso-Woody road was poisoned "about a week ago" (several condors in that area today. He said there were about 3000 sheep in this area about 4 weeks ago & up to 10,000 earlier - these had been moved to the desert (Inyo Kern country). By 4 p.m. saw no more condors. Returned to Delano for the night.



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Gymnogyps californianus

May 7, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

Left Delano at 7 a.m. & drove via McFarland to Rexroth Corner (arrived 8 a.m.). I parked about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile E. of the Corner. At 8:04 I saw a condor circling about 2 miles E. of me. Light NW breeze, sky  $\frac{1}{10}$  cumulus, air warm. I saw <sup>only</sup> 2 or 3 buzzards at this time. This condor rose from about 300 to 1000 ft. by 8:10, wandering  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile N + S as it rose. at 8:20 I lost it at about same position - 2 buzzards were close to ground below. at 8:30 I saw 2 condors & 4  $\pm$  buzzards about 3 miles to E. of me. These birds were all in the direction of Oak Flat Lookout from Rexroth Corner, the lookout & Breckenridge mtn. beyond being discernible today. I then drove to a hilltop about 1 mile E. of Rexroth Corner & 300  $\pm$  yds. S. of Little Creek. From there at 8:50 I saw 4 condors circling from 50 to 500' over the hills about 2 miles to NE of me, & about 7 buzzards in the same area - this was apparently near the high-tension power line which was the E. (& most recent) boundary of the poisoned area. 65°F, wind faint to fair from NW (the prevailing direction I am told by airmen here). The 4 went down out of sight. at 9:05, 4 again appeared there, rising, occasionally flapping. 9:08, I saw 6 circling at 400  $\pm$ ' in that area. This group scattered, & at about 9:14 I saw 1 or 2 go behind a hill about 2 miles





Gymnogyps californianus

May 4, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

to E. of me, just beyond high the power line. 9:13, a lone adult soared W. from power line vicinity, 100±' over the hills, & at 9:20 dropped into a hollow about 3/4 mile N. of me (closest condor I have seen so far today). I believe this bird landed. A maneuver often seen at low altitude is the dipping of one wing tip followed by a steep bank to that side - perhaps the dip is the result rather than the cause of the bank, the upcurved primaries snapping down when the turn commences. 1 or 2 buzzards flew out of the hollow where the close condor alighted. Back to Joe Keyes: he believes many ~~condors~~<sup>buzzards</sup> are shot along the roads so is fearful of publicizing the condors because they too might attract shooters. Blue Mtn. Lookout can also be observed from this spot, so both Blue Mtn. & Oak Flat Lookouts should see condors. 9:30, the close adult flapped SW (down canyon) out of the hollow where it disappeared, then circled & rose, 2 buzzards<sup>2</sup> apparently following it in air. Feeding (?) time here not over 10 minutes - apparently a squirrel does not keep a condor occupied long. The close adult rose to 300±', the buzzard "escort" left, and (10:35) adult headed to NE in a long glide to join a group of 10 condors circling about 2 miles NE of me. I counted at least 14, possibly 16, at 9:39. Most glided



2

Gymnogyps californianus

May 4, 1946

N. Famoso, Calif.

to SW & at 9:45 a group of 10 (+1 buzzard) milled about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles E. of me at 200-800' altitude. The group broke up within a minute, a few straggling back to NE at a time, & all strung out for about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile at 9:47. Counted 11 at 9:50 - along the power line area toward Blue Mtn. from me. Twice this morning I saw one condor chase another<sup>briefly</sup>, both banking sharply with wings strongly flexed, & at least once attacker had feet down. 9:57, 6 were over the power line area in Blue Mtn. direction, & ~~2~~ 3 in a circling group  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile E. of me, 2 or 3 others scattered about 2 miles E. of me. All seemed to B-line toward a spot about 3 miles ESE of me where buzzards & condors were milling - at least 5 condors there at 10:02, some dipping out of sight in the hills. I saw one condor apparently land just out of sight in that area - about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile E. of the power line - at 10:07, then no activity at that spot. I scanned the horizon but found no condors. At 10:15 I saw one land atop the hummock behind which the 10:07 bird disappeared, then I saw at least one other <sup>also</sup> perched there & another about 100 yds. to E. across a dip. One bird from hummock flew across the dip & landed by other - a few seconds later one of these (same I believe) flew out of sight behind the hummock, & the other took off at 10:24. I then saw 3 and  $5\pm$  buzzards circling over the



Gymnogyps californianus

May 4, 1946

N. Famoso, Calif.

hummock area as if leaving, & none <sup>on ground</sup> perched. One bird in taking off down hill took 3 flops only, then glided. 10:20, saw 6 condors scattered in air over the hummock area - Oak Flat 20 directly beyond this spot. 10:30, saw 5 condors & 1 buzzard circling over & dipping behind a knoll  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile N. of the hummock. 10:40, 6 dipping behind the knoll & 2 others  $400 \pm'$  over them. Apparently the birds were rising from that area - there were 5 scattered to  $1000 \pm'$  altitude over the spot at 10:45. 10:48, 8 scattered over that area, most heading N  $\pm$  slowly, at  $700 \pm'$  altitude. 10:50, I saw ~~4~~ <sup>4</sup> condors & 12  $\pm$  buzzards circling about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles NE of me, & 1 with (over)  $6 \pm$  buzzards in same vicinity, while while  $4 \pm$  other condors approached from S  $\pm$ . 11:08, I saw 2 condors among 12  $\pm$  buzzards near power line to ESE (near hummock where I saw some land earlier); at least one went down as if to land. Apparently the condors are scattered for about 2 miles near the power line (beyond to E., this side to NE). None has come closer than about 1 mile to the Porterville road. I moved then to a knoll about 2 miles E. of Rexroth Corner &  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile S. of Little Creek. At 11:30 from there I saw an adult cruising about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile N. of me - at 11:33 it dropped ~~behind~~ behind a ridge (to near Little Creek), & a second adult did likewise at 11:34, while another with feet down, circled  $800 \pm'$  overhead as if to land. Interrupted



Gymnogyps californianus

May 9, 1946

Nr. Famoso Calif.

then by Joe Keyes. At 11:38 saw 2 adults rising from that area (& 4 buzzards). Keyes said they saw 4 adults circling near Granite Station at 10 a.m. They also flushed one which was feeding "with a buzzard" near the Famoso road. Joe Keyes records: May 5, 1 imm. May 21, 7 adults & 1 imm. May 22, <sup>3</sup>4 adults & 1 young. May 27, 6 adults & 1 young. May 25, 1 adult & 7 imm. feeding at 1 spot; watched from about 100 yds. That day saw 16 at once. He saw 8 or 9 feeding on a dead calf on Tejon Ranch. At 11:57 I saw 5 with 8± buzzards rising about 3/4 mile to N., & 3 cruising about 1 mile to E. Talked with Keyes till about 12:08. He said the area E. of the power line & S. of Famoso road had been poisoned about a week ago - condors were landing on the ground there today. About 12:10 I saw 5 condors with 20± buzzards circling about 1 mile to E. This group broke up and a group of 3 or 4 condors & 15± buzzards formed over Little Creek about 3/4 miles to N. of me - I saw no condors slight by 12:25. One imm. (quite dark wing lining) circled 100±' over me for about 4 minutes, then headed off to join a group. This imm. had a protruding gray "crop button" 12:45, I saw 7 in air & 2 perched on ground in the Little Creek canyon about over the road. at least 2 imm. I saw one adult with #6 & 7





Gymnogyps californianus

May 4, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

left primaries <sup>short on</sup>, missing. This one landed in a canyon about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile W. of me. I drove to the ridge crest & saw 4 buzzards on the ground & the adult 100 $\pm$ ' from them (& about 50 yds. from me). The adult took off & flap-circled vigorously to clear the area. I found no "meat" where the condor had been, but the buzzards left a squirrel tail, ~~sk~~ skull, inside out legs, a 6 $\pm$ " piece of damp skin, & a broken up rib cage. At 1:11 I was on a ridge  $\frac{1}{4}$  $\pm$  mile S. of Little Creek looking N., & I saw 4 <sup>(adults)</sup> condors & 2 turkey vultures perched on the open ground  $\frac{1}{4}$  $\pm$  mile N. of the creek. I saw one adult take off to N. about 1:14, & the others disappeared (behind ridge & ridge). This spot was about 2 miles E. of Rexroth Corner. At 1:40 I was 300 $\pm$  yds. from 11 turkey vultures standing on a slope. An adult condor, feet down, was soaring near - it passed 100 $\pm$ ' over the buzzards & continued on. A near-adult with 2 gaps in left secondaries & #4 $\pm$  right primary out also passed over the group without turning back. This second bird went  $\frac{1}{2}$  $\pm$  mile S., circled, then soared back 100 $\pm$ ' over buzzards (1:50), then headed N. & after  $\frac{1}{2}$  $\pm$  mile again circled at about 200' altitude, then headed N. again in a wandering manner. Condors thereafter became scarce. At 2:15 I saw one flap-circling & descending as if to land about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile NE of Rexroth Corner, & at 2:20 another at 500 $\pm$ ' altitude



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May 9, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

in that area - there were 10 $\pm$  buzzards scattered also in that vicinity. 2:23, again saw 2 condors in same vicinity - one spiraled down sharply, wings flexed, feet flung down, as if to land, & the other continued soaring back & forth at 300 $\pm$ ' altitude. The latter circled & rose downwind until at about 2000' altitude, then glided steadily toward Fulton Pk. in the distance as if "going home". A fair NW breeze continued. 2:45, I saw 2 beyond the power line about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile to E. of the Corner - circling. 2:48, I saw 4 condors & 15 $\pm$  buzzards circling in a loose group about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile NE of the Corner. I watched one - it wandered about 1 mile SE, then back over the others at high altitude (1500 $\pm$ '). At 2:58 I saw 3 condors spiraling down, legs extended, over the same area as before (out of my sight behind a hill). I drove toward that spot but the condors - 6 of them - flushed when I was out of sight so that I couldn't see upon what they were feeding (3:15). Two seemed to ~~do~~ alight  $\frac{1}{4}$   $\pm$  mile distant after 1 $\pm$  minute, & 4 adults circled near the car at 100 $\pm$ ' altitude. Two adults showed the distended "crop" area & 2 did not. 3:23, the 4 circled over the area  $\frac{1}{4}$   $\pm$  mile W. of where flushed, 3 with feet down. Perhaps they were not disturbed by the car. One parachuted down at 3:25 & another glided into the hollow with feet <sup>3</sup> not extended. All 4 were "in" by 3:26  $\frac{1}{2}$ , & the remaining



Cymnogyys californicus

May 9, 1946

N. Famoso, G. I. F.

one flap-glided back & forth, feet not down (distended crop one). 3:29, 6 condors & 3 turkey vultures rose out of the hollow, undisturbed by me. a transport plane had just passed 5000±' over in about the direction of the sun, however. 3:33, an imm. dropped into the hollow as if to land; an adult swept back & forth over the hollow, feet up, then flap-glided to S. (after the other condors) at 3:35. About 3:36 I saw one disappear behind a low hill  $\frac{1}{2}$ ± mile SW of where last rose; another soared back & forth over the spot. <sup>3:40</sup> ~~4:20~~ two condors came ~~flap~~ flapping up from that area; 1 adult headed back to where imm. had disappeared, & also disappeared behind ridge. I saw 3 others also heading that way. The 3 were over the spot at 3:45 but wandered off to E. about 3:46. 3:53, 3 condors again over that spot. One had a left primary & secondary bent up as if broken - possibly these 3 included the 2 which were supposedly perched. One adult circled & rose with a buzzard - as though condors near. This one rose to 500±' near me, then? 4:00, I watched another about 1 mile NE of the Corner - it was the "bent wing" bird. It rose to about 800' altitude, soared NE about 2 miles, then W. about a mile & was joined by another condor. Both wandered to E. then (4:09) & I saw a 3rd. about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile E. of the two. Breeze still



Gymnogyps californianus

May 9, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

light to fair from NW. I saw one up to 4:15 at about 1500' altitude about 6 miles NE of Rerath Corner - "going home" I judge. I searched the area where I estimated the 6 condors had been - I found many squirrel holes, but in 15 minutes search found no suitable food. I did find 3 squirrel remains - 2 dissociated & little better than skeletons, the third dried rather recently. This last had skin turned inside out, the bones of hind legs being pulled out of their skin. The skull was nearly intact tho holes had been eaten in the hide near ears. All viscera gone but most of backbone remained. The tail was present with hair on but detached from body in the other two. Skulls & backbone were fairly intact. This is probably buzzard-condor work. About 1/2 mile W. of the power line within 200 yds. of the road I found 3 squirrels, intact, upon which beetles were feeding (too close to road?). I found 1 which was consumed in large part but not turned inside-out. Cars pass on this road perhaps once per hour. My car was stopped & a roadster holding 2 teen agers & a girl stopped nearby, & this conversation ensued: "Hunting?" "Sometimes," I said. "Well there's two big birds - turkeys or something - out in the middle of that field, and they're the biggest ~~things~~ you birds I ever saw." They were turkey vultures - the group's face dropped





Gymnogyps californianus

May 4, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

when I explained they were beneficial birds. If this group had been armed, it would have been buzzards or condors funeral. I saw no more condors by 5:30 p.m.

May 5, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

Drove to Rexrock Corner, 7 miles E. of Famoso, then about 2 miles W. E. on the Famoso - Woody road. I picked up a black & white cat & a small jack rabbit on the road for bait - both in the rigor-mortis state & somewhat bloody. I picked up a squirrel about 1 day dead too. Then I shot an old ewe which had been left by the sheepmen (shot about 7:30). I placed these carcasses near the crest of a hill about 10 miles E. of & 2 miles N. of Famoso & about 1 mile N. of the road (& Little Creek). I placed my car about 500' to W. of the carcasses & spread a tarp over it, leaving part of the W. window uncovered for observation. I was in this blind at 8:15. Car was parked next to groups of old concrete building foundations about 7 ft. high. At 8:40 a.m. I saw one condor circling about 2 miles to the E., & about 8:43 it seemed to be near Mt. Paso at about 500' altitude. From blind I could look toward Oak Flat & Blue Mtn. lookouts. Breeze was fair from S. & even at 7 a.m. sky clear. 78° at 8:30 a.m. My bait was about 1/4 mile W. of the Edison power line. 9:08, saw one turkey vulture, first I have seen to -



Gymnogyps californianus

May 5, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

day. These seem to arrive & leave at about the same time as the condors but a few may hang around or even roost near the food after condors have departed. 9:12, I saw 2 condors circling about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile S. of the bait, upper one with feet down, & a 3rd.  $\frac{1}{4} \pm$  mile further S. 6 condors & 3 buzzards in a loose group circling  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile S. of ~~the~~ bait at 9:15, at 9:17 I saw one adult drop down as if to land near the power line & road about  $\frac{1}{2}$  ~~mi~~ mile S. of bait. By 9:21 at least 3 condors had landed at that spot (about 100 yds. from power line tower it appeared). One turkey vulture passed 100' over the bait, then headed S. 9:24, I saw 5 condors & 6  $\pm$  turkey vultures flap-flap flapping away to W. of the landing spot over the flat ground. One gave 24 successive flaps. 9:27, I saw another rise flapping from that spot. It flapped seldom when at & above height of power line towers, & rose circling over the spot where it took off. A bunch of condors & buzzards worked nearly over me, & 2 at least (condors) were circling 300' over my bait at 9:30. The birds left within 2 or 3 minutes - perhaps they didn't see it. Retragressing: I watched one bird circling to gain altitude yesterday, and it kept the tail constantly tilted with low side away from the turn. There were no straight stretches in this circling - all curving flight. I watched



Gymnogyps californianus

May 7, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Cal.

the shadow of one circling & moving downwind. The speed of the bird was quite slow on the turns as compared to the "straightaway" - perhaps 10 m.p.h. on the turn, & 30 m.p.h. on the downwind leg. 9:58, a lone condor soared W. about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile S. of the bait. 10:05, I saw one cruising over the hills about 1 mile to S. of bait. 10:15, one circling about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile S. of bait at 200'± alt.. 10:50, a raven flew back & forth about 10' over the bait several times, then departed. 10:54, I saw a mature golden eagle feeding on a squirrel(?) about 300 yds. N. of the bait. The eagle picked up the intestine in its bill & cast it aside but ate other morsels it pulled from the carcass. General comment on this feeding area: it is on its way out; the Bakersfield-Porterville road is a recent development. Oil wells are within a mile or so to S. High prices might induce cultivation of this land. The power & telephone lines are a menace to flight. The march of "civilization" will doubtless tend toward more use of this area by people & more disturbance of condors. By 12:00, breeze was NW about 15 m.p.h. No ~~some~~ more birds had approached the bait. <sup>85°F.</sup> 90°F. At 12:30 I dismantled my blind - I believe concealment was good as an eagle which had been perched  $\frac{1}{4}$ ± mile away for <sup>over</sup> an hour left quickly when I appeared. I drove toward Kernath Corner. Condors scarce & buzzards few. at 1:10 I saw



Gymnogyps californianus

May 5, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

one condor about 3 miles E. of the Corner - it was joined by a second. Both circled together & worked  $1 \pm$  mile S. over highest hill to  $1000 \pm'$  altitude, then headed E. NE as if going a long way. Breeze lacking at times, about 15 m.p.h. at others, from NW. At 1:40 I saw one about 3 miles E. of Rexroth Corner. Then I drove around the "triangle", seeing no condors, & arriving at the E. apex at about 2:25. From there I saw 4 condors at 2:30 - 3 descended behind a hill  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile S. of Little Creek & another about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles to W. was heading that direction. I drove cross country trying to reach the landing area - was stopped by a raven, but saw one dark imm. soaring close; an adult flap-gliding to W. as if just having taken off,  $20 \pm'$  above ground; & at <sup>3:00</sup> ~~2:45~~ a total of 6 condors in air at once over a  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile long area (about 4 miles E. of Corner). Most went behind a ridge out of my sight. I drove to top of a knoll just S. of Little Creek to watch. Fair NW breeze at 3 p.m. The condors apparently escaped without my seeing them. At 3:45 saw one condor (or eagle) circling & rising about 2 miles S. of me - it rose to  $1500 \pm'$  as if to glide off toward Breckenridge Mtn. I saw no birds near my "bait" from a distance. Saw none by 4 p.m. Breeze continued. I returned to Delano. G.R. Buckingham says morning breeze is generally SE, then shifts to NW in this area.





Gymnogyps californianus

May 5, 1946

Kern Co., Calif.

Last evening Bufort Fox called my aunt & told her that 21 condors had been seen on Teyon Ranch to S. of the Race Station road about 6 miles E. of the highway (99).

May 6, 1946

Mr. Famoso, Calif.

Drove from Delano to Reproth Corner, arriving 8:05 a.m. I proceeded up Woody road & examined my bait of yesterday - it was untouched, but now the sheep was bloated & several hundred flies crawled & buzzed around the carcasses. I proceeded to top of the knoll where I made last observations last night - about 11 miles E. of Famoso,  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile S. of Little Creek. Saw no turkey vultures until 8:49 (then 1). Breeze light from N. at about 8 a.m., fair from SW by 9 a.m. 9:05, saw 5 buzzards in air. Sky clear, 83°F. 9:18, saw one condor about 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  miles to SE (almost directly toward Bear Mtn.). This bird dipped behind a hill. at 9:37 I saw one condor & 8 $\pm$  turkey vultures in same area over furthest hills I could see in Bear Mtn. direction. This one dipped out of sight between 2 hills, along with 5 $\pm$  buzzards. 9:52, I saw one condor rising over that area, feet down, with 7 $\pm$  buzzards. Breeze NW, <sup>15</sup> 7 $\pm$  m.p.h. & stronger. 10:01, I watched an apparent adult in that area for about 5 minutes until it spiraled slowly down, legs extended & disappeared between the hills. 10:07 I saw another soaring there &



Gymnogyps californianus

May 6, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

watched it constantly until 10:20. It circled at 300±' altitude, giving an occasional wing dip or half dip. Then it bore NW in a long glide until about over Little Creek 2± miles E. of Porterville road, then circled - saw a total of 4 condors scattered there at about 10:23. At 10:25 saw another at 200±' altitude, circling, 2± miles toward Bear Mtn. again. I saw 2 near the power line about 1 mile to W. of me at 10:34 - I watched the higher one, at 1000±' altitude, until 10:52. It circled & wandered to W. for about a mile, then N. about 1 mile, then descended to 500±' with several wing dips & passed the vicinity of my "bait"; then continued off to N. until about 2 miles N. of me (where I lost it). At 11:20, I saw one about 300' over the power line to W. of me & watched it until 11:39. It headed W. about 1 mile to a group of circling turkey vultures & circled with them at 100±', then rose as the buzzards rose (12+ turkey vultures), with them, near the bottom of the column of vultures, then near the top as the whirling group flattened at 500±'; then alone above them to about 1000' altitude. I timed about 5 circles - they were 16 ~ 17 seconds each. Condor turned one circle to vultures' 2 - almost exact ratio. Condor then headed SE in a long glide



Gymnogypscalifornianus

May 6, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

until I lost it at 11:39 when it was about 2 miles to S. toward Bear mtn. I saw a golden eagle flapping close to ground today & noted that the spread tail moved up & down with the wing beat - possibly to steady pitching caused by wing flapping (do condors do this too?). 11:53, I saw 3 about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile W. of power line over the Little Creek ridge (S. side). One circled with 6 $\pm$  vultures & 2 dipped below a ridge  $\frac{1}{4}$  $\pm$  mile N. of them. The Little Creek ridge near the power line has been one of most frequented areas in last few days - apparently on the flight line to SE. Have seen no activity near my "bait". Two cars stopped yesterday afternoon near there & were "skulking" with rifles out of the cars - apparently there they were shooting at squirrels; condors & buzzards had left the area by that time of afternoon. 12:03, I saw 5 or 6 condors scattered over  $\frac{1}{2}$  $\pm$  mile area about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile W. of where power line crossed Little Creek ridge. At 12:06 I saw but 3, from 500 $\pm$ ' to 2000 $\pm$ ' altitude, over that area; they drifted W., then descended to 300 $\pm$ ' level. Then I watched lowest one - it wandered northward, then (12:28) was joined by 2 others, & all were heading NW about 2 miles NE of Rexroth Corner when I lost them at 12:33. Breeze strong at times, backing at others, but ~~to~~ northerly. 83°F. I left the area & drove to Poro via Granite Canyon. Most of the road was



Gymnogyps californianus

May 6, 1946

Kern Co., Calif.

lined with oil wells. At Paso were 80± Herefords & a Kern Co. Land Co. sign - so, some stock in the area. A high bare hill just SE of Paso might <sup>make</sup> ~~make~~ a good station for watching condors passing over. Thought: baiting condors is much like baiting trout (smart trout). It apparently can't be figured always. Different areas, areas, concealment, are tried - sometimes they work but often results are unpredictable. Apparently trout - & condors - like to be fed what they are naturally feeding on at the time, so should use cattle bait in cattle country, squirrel in squirrel country, etc. Drove on to Bakersfield & saw Bufort Fox. He said a man on the poisoning crew had made the 21 condor report & that the crew was now camped at the old ostrich farm. Fox said the birds were seen "one day last week". Fox also said he saw 1 on Tejin Ranch a few days ago (near headquarters). I drove eastward then to Bena & started scanning Mt. Adelaide area from the roadside at 3:20. At 3:30 I saw 3 condors at about level of top of Mt. Adelaide & near it, heading W or NW. I watched one - it disappeared behind a ridge 2 ± miles <sup>W. of</sup> ~~E. of~~ Mt. top at 3:38, heading in Kern River power plant (& Paso) direction. Then I saw one (one of same 3?) ~~near~~ <sup>west</sup> near mountain top again, & it followed a similar course. Fair breeze from W, clear sky. Saw none by 4 p.m.





Gymnogyps californianus

May 6, 1946

Tejon Ranch, Calif.

so proceeded on around Kern Mesa, stopping several times to scan Bear Mtn., but saw no condors by 5 p.m. The Kern Mesa & Ilmon areas had hundreds of Hereford cattle - unusually heavy concentration. At Tejon Ranch, Perry Sprague told me he had seen one condor with several turkey vultures a few days ago, on the ground, on El Paso Creek above headquarters. He said that many years ago, (about 45 yrs.), condors roosted on old dead pines on Brokenridge Mtn. in upper part of Lucas Creek canyon, where the road reached the first pines. Sprague's father used to log up there, & Perry worked there - he said that they were always interested in "the motters". Perry also worked at Weed Patch, at a mine near Frazier Park, & other spots about since before 1900. He said that the condor numbers seemed about the same now as 40 years ago. For information on condors on the San Emidio side of the valley, he suggested especially Gene Harris who lives on Salt Creek (road taken off near start of Wheeler Ridge Oil Field road). Salt Creek Pete (a Frenchman) and another old timer live up Salt Creek. The Tejon blacksmith, Morton, worked on San Emidio Ranch a long time & may have info too. He suggested also Raleigh Duntley of who lives on Oak Creek south of Tehachapi - Duntley runs cattle on the S. side of the Tehachapis from Cottonwood Creek to near Mojave



Gymnogyps californianus

May 6, 1946

Tejon Ranch, Calif.

Perry retold me the story of how he caught a condor in the "Thompson Field" on the ranch. He was driving in his

car when he came upon the bird, & he followed he-  
<sup>erry headed off the bird with his car several times, thereby preventing it from</sup>  
<sup>taking off</sup>, & he found he could outrun the bird <sup>at</sup> foot.

He heard it as the bird flew, then landed. Perry caught it with a lasso & put it in the back of his coupe.

<sup>He had difficulty in "lassing" the bird as "it was clever with its wings".</sup>

He heard a great noise in there & pecked in to find

the bird shaking & thrashing a pair of skid chains

about. Perry kept the bird several hours, showing

it to people, then put it in a chicken wire <sup>sage</sup> cage

(about 15' x 20'). In the morning it was gone,

the cage wire apparently having been cut in

a vertical line. Perry thinks one of the Indians

turned it loose. Perry was going to notify J. R. Lumber

ton to see if anyone wanted it. On another occa-

sion, Perry tells, he came over a ridge onto a

coyote carcass. They had been poisoning coyotes

with strychnine filled tallow balls at that

time. There were eight condors around this

large (about 35 lbs.) coyote. One grabbed the

animal in its bill, lifted it, & shook it, then dropped

it. Then the same bird pecked at it, breaking the

skin, & the group moved in. Sprague, of course,

tells a good story though basic facts are correct.

He said condors nested once in a pine tree on Buckenridge

rdn. I talked with the Fed Tejon Ranch blacksmith,

Norton (or Morton). He was very loquacious but knew

- Norton - 6 on Spanish Lane
- 2 - Norton with Norton
  - 1 - caught on West Creek.  
2 hrs. return

Gymnogyps californianus

May 6, 1946

Tejon Ranch, Cal. f.

the deer field marks of condors. He had spent years in the San Emigdio country. He said that once he saw <sup>one</sup> ~~three~~ pair below Mill Patero. Recently he saw "three pair" near Spanish Ranch (Chimeneas area). Another time, he said, he & another man caught a condor on Salt Creek near Black Bob Canyon. The bird had been feeding, apparently, & it had difficulty in taking off in the canyon. Two men caught it in "about 2 hours". Later they freed it. It stood on a rock about 15 minutes, then took off. He said the bird had large talons with which it grabbed them. Norton also makes a good story - but maybe he did catch a condor or other large bird.

May 7, 1946

Tejon Ranch, Cal. f.

Tony Arajo, Tejon head vaquero for years & a man of high intelligence, said he believed there were more condors than formerly on the ranch. I drove to a point about 2 miles N. of the foot of Pastoria Creek canyon & watched that area, & N. to the Grapevine, from 8 to 10 a.m. - I saw no condors, & but a few buzzards & ravens. Warm clear day, fair northerly breeze. Mrs. Percy said she had seen an eagle chasing a condor near foot of Hopper Canyon a few days ago. They seldom saw condors that low, she said. In general, on the Patero old Ranch, they saw most condors on cool



Gymnogyps californianus

May 7, 1946

Fillmore, Calif.

windy days & less on warm calm days, she said. Sid Peyton told me that on May 1, near West Fork of the Seque, he saw 6 condors "playing" in air. Sid P. Jr. told me that May 4 he was on the road above Val Verde (near Castaic) & saw one condor feeding on a squirrel there, near the road. Mrs. Percy said she had met a man who had been fishing in the Siquoc, & that he said he had seen condors there.

May 8, 1946.

Fog in Fillmore. Rode up to Turner Oil Co. with Pete Legon. He said a scoutmaster (Oakland) named Cain & another man had been up May 3 & had seen a condor in the dead trees by the road. We arrived at Peter at 10:10, 500' above the fog. I hiked then to Hopper Rim. at 10:50 I saw one adult perched quietly on a top stub (12"±) limb of a dead Ps. at head of Parking Canyon about 200' W. of the road. This was about 3rd. highest tree. The bird paid no great attention to me & remained upright, back to road, as I passed (I was 15'± higher than bird) at 11:00. I went then to where work & Hill had the calf carcass on April 28. Only 6± bone fragments remained, the largest being the lower jaw (one posterior area broken). Apparently carnivores had been at work. I saw no hide or hair, nor any feathers, excrement, or other sign of condor presence. I





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May 8, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Cal. F.

returned then from Big Meadow to the rim. The adult was perched as before at 11:45. Air was nearly calm, so I suppose this adult was becalmed. Saw no condors in the Big Cave or other <sup>oft</sup> frequented areas. Water ran at Condor Falls but perhaps not above Big Cave. I hiked northward along the road. The adult was ~~was~~ before at 11:55, then at 11:57 I saw one in air just W. of Pyramid Lookout. This was an adult with short #7 right primary, and a bulging "crop". The perch was bare - so probably the bird from perch. This adult skirted the cliffs along Hopper Rim going southward & rounded Parking Knoll <sup>before</sup> ~~without~~ crossing rim to E. A bird not hungry & flight difficult because of dead air = perched bird near ridge at mid-day. I continued on up the rim arriving at Old Cabin at 12:25 and at White Point at 1:35. I inspected the old horse carcass - it showed no evidence of condor visitation, but ravens & mammalian scavengers had moved it & removed most of the meat - the stomach was still there. Visited then my camp & left there at 2:15 heading for Pete Legan's on the road. The low fog had dissolved about noon leaving a ~~heavy~~ heavy rising haze. Breeze fair from S. at times after 12M but calm at times too. Saw 6+ turkey vultures. At 2:30 an immature soared near me near Small Meadow Pass. It had #1+ left primary short, the "pointed" tail, & dark center to under wing patches. It circled



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May 8, 1946

Hopper Canyon, Cal. F.

over the slopes near North Point. The hazy conditions increased - could not see even Bear Heaven by 3 p. m. I saw no condor until 3:41 when near Parking Canyon. One adult, "crop" bulging, came in from W., gave a wing dip, & sped into lower Parking Canyon as if to alight. I judged soaring conditions poor at that time. Reached Logan's at about 4:15. Apparently no water atop Big Cove. The falls of North Creek was dry. Roosting probably would be on Arundell Ridge now instead of near Big Cove, but apparently very few condors in this area now.

May 10, 1946

Pasadena, Cal. F.

Phoned C S Robinson at San Bernardino (Forest Supervisor's office). Re condors he said none had been reported east of Josephine Pk. (Angeles N.F.) in recent years; except 1 man, supposedly reliable, who said 3 came in annually at a place on the San Bernardino N.F. (report sent to Crommelley). Robinson offered to take me to see this man on a future trip. Visited M W Durham, district ranger of Arroyo Seco District, Angeles N.F. He said he had seen 2 at Atmore Meadows (nr. Laurel Mt.) about 12 years ago. He had been ranger on the Newhall district from 1931-1939, & Arroyo Seco for last 10 years. He was skeptical of reports made by some lookouts as he had had a turkey vulture pointed out to him as a condor



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May 10, 1946

# Pasadena, Calif.

by Alt Al Fisher (?) on Josephine Pk. once. There is a fine relief map of the Angeles including Kern Creek in the office here (281 E. Colorado - Post Office Bldg.). The recent lookout of Josephine Pk. is Starr H. Barnum of 1021 Fairview Drive, La Cañada, & he will go up to Josephine Pk. about mid-June. At Newhall talked with Ranger McCormack & assistant Howard Evans. McCormack said that condors were reported from West Liebre & Whitaker Pk. in this district occasionally. He said that he saw 9 once near Big Pine Lookout (W. of it) in April of about 1934 when with C. S. Robinson. Evans said he had seen 2 (?) near Alpine Meadows near Palmdale, once (I doubt his identification), that he had spent considerable time on Liebre Mtn. last summer but had seen none, & that his father caught one once (bird feeding by roadside, couldn't take off - turkey vulture probably). McCormack volunteered to instruct his lookouts to watch for condors & record information thereon.

May 11, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

Arrived at Rexroth Corner, 7 miles E. of Famoso, at 8:30. Visited then my "bait" of several days ago. There was one condor feather (black) at the

39-43 1 down to 5

46 - 2, down

50 - 1, ft. - then 4 at 52.

54 - 5, with 6+ long, as a v.

1 down at 10:00 - it was black, & legs #4+5. alt.

10:01 - 2nd od. - host Br.

73 - 3 over 5. or. alt.

10:09 - 1 down leg. down, 1 over, 1 3/4 in. to 5.

10:16 - last one over down.

18, 2 to 5 1 1/2 in, 2 to E. 1 1/2 in.

(to 6 to 10).

remember the fly,   
 over up in fly.

22: - 1 down leg. full 2 in. to SE.

28 - 1 1 1/2 in to E - overland. 31, down & down

1 mile E. on my way. 35-1 over. over then.

same? at 1, left my right & at at not tail. : 40, 2, alt.

1 mile to SE over. same as last. No crop lungs.

43 - base. leg. full 1 mile SE.

46 - 2nd then - over. down

49 - 1 over down, 31-2.

May 11, 1946 Gymnogyps californianus  
~~Mr. PD~~

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

carcasses. The sheep had been dragged 20' downhill ( $5 \pm 90$ ), the <sup>intestine</sup> ~~viscera~~ lay separate from the carcass, one foreleg was skinned to the wrist though bones intact & connected. There was a  $10 \pm$ " hole in left side, a larger one in abdomen, a  $12 \pm$ " hole at shoulders (& eaten to bone), & other holes. Skin remained on head. Skin was dry now. The cat & rabbit lay where before but apparently had been eaten at skull & side, cat ~~vis~~ intestine was separate from carcass, & one foreleg of each was separated from body - bodies both dry. The squirrel was not found. I went then to a knoll about 4 miles E. of Rex-rath Corner &  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile S. of Little Creek. at 9:15 arrived & began searching - at 9:22 I saw one condor about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles to S., circling  $300 \pm'$  over a knoll - about 3 minutes later it descended ~~into~~ between two hills, wings flapped, feet down. Fair N. breeze, sky ~~has~~ hazy but cloudless,  $62^\circ\text{F}$ . at 9:39 I saw one above the power line about 1 mile N. of me - it glided ~~N~~ SE and went down out of sight at 9:43 (about 2 miles in 4 minutes, 30 m.p.h.). at 9:46 I saw 2 circling low there, flapping frequently (about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles S. of me). 9:50, ~~saw~~ & 9:52, I saw 4 there, & 5 at 9:54, circling & rising, with 6 buzzards. After  $1 \pm$  min-






Gymnogyphs californianus

May 11, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

longs  
op of  
3090

seen there earlier. "Ragged" had no "prop bulge". 10:43, one, & 10:46, the other, disappeared behind a hill as if to land. 10:49, I saw 1, & at 10:51, 2, circling near the burn.

As the group scattered, 1 passed over me heading NW at 10:00 (adult). This one had ragged to right wing (NW), a slot in left side of tail, & short #4± left primary. 10:01 a second adult passed  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile S. of me also gliding E. NW. 10:03, I saw 3 still circling  $1\frac{1}{2}$ ± mi. to S. 10:09, one of the adults went down about 2 miles to NW of me just beyond a burned area. This grass had been burned since my last visit & was about 6 acres in extent & located about at the center of the road "triangle". I saw the parson's car on the Porterville road W. of that area this morning. <sup>The</sup> second sounder was over the burn, & another was about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile S. of me. 10:16, I lost the one over burn. 10:18, there were 2 about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles S. of me, 2 more about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles to E., & so 6 total (including 2 at burn). 10:22, I saw one descend behind a hill about 2 miles to SE of me (halfway to an oil derrick). 10:25, saw 1 still about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles to E. & watched it - it wandered about at 100±' altitude, put feet down at 10:31, & descended as if to alight about 1 mile E. of me. In going down, flexed wings appear  from front & the turns are much faster & shorter than <sup>in</sup> the normal "searching" flight. 10:35, I saw one circling in that vicinity again - it was the "ragged" one again. 10:40, I saw 2 there - <sup>possibly</sup> probably the same as



Gymnogyps californianus

May 11, 1946

seen there earlier. "Ragged" had no crop bulge. 10:43, one, 10:46, the other, disappeared behind the hill as if to land. 10:49 I saw 1 over the burn, & 10:51, 2 there.

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

11:00, the ragged one & <sup>2</sup> another adult were about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile S. of me, circling, at about 300' ("ragged") and 100' (the 2 others). The 2 low ones skimmed skimmed 30 $\pm$ ' over the hills at times & frequently flapped, while "ragged" climbed to 500 $\pm$ '; then headed to NW in a long flap-glide (11:04). 10:04-11:08, I saw one about 100' over the burn. Looking S. then I saw 2 (same as earlier?) circling, flapping, & rising rapidly about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles S. of me. Fair NW breeze still, sky  $\frac{1}{10}$  cumulus. Two buzzards circled near the cinders. I lost these about 11:15. No watching them until 11:45. 11:52, I saw 2 flap-gliding at 500 $\pm$ ' about 2 miles ESE of me. They soared close together, then glided fast, descending, & at 11:55 I saw 2 other cinders circling with several buzzards below them. 11:58<sup>2</sup>, I saw 1 cinder about 2 miles to SE & watched it. It circled at 300 $\pm$ ', air-lashed less, then put feet down (11:58) & glided down in a gradual spiral, disappearing between 2 hills at 12:03. I saw a second cinder also spiral down there. 12:05, I saw 5 with 1 buzzard circling low near edge of the burn. I then shot a few squirrels, then proceeded toward Peyroth Corner. When 2 $\pm$  miles E. of corner, I saw 2 cinders & 4 $\pm$  turkey vultures standing on the ground 100 $\pm$ ' S. of Little Creek near a telephone pole. This was



*Eymnogyx californianus*

May 11, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

about 200 yds. from road or less, & a truck had just been by there. I stopped on road & saw adult pecking at an object (squirrel?) on the ground. The immature took off 30 $\pm$  sec. later - a dark imm. with <sup>slat</sup> notch in center each wing & left side tail. The adult took off to NE with 3 or 4 haps about 30 sec., later, than the buzzards. Both condors flap circled until 100 $\pm$ ' high, then glided off. ~~adult to NE, imm. to~~ (adult to NW). Then I drove toward the spot where the condors had been, & at 11:08, upon coming over the last rise before reaching Little Creek, I came upon a dark immature taking off about 100' from me. This bird was off in about 3 gallops, then flapped & circled until 200 $\pm$  above me at 1:12. I examined the area where this youngster had taken off & found one ground squirrel which had apparently been dead a week or more. It lay about 8" below surface of the ground on the ramp leading into burrow, & was visible from above only. Skull, upper foreleg, & upper ribs were fairly cleared of meat. The carcass stunk & was infested with beetle larvae. Skin gone from rib & shoulder area forward to eyes, & opened over abdomen. <sup>Tail & hind</sup> ~~should~~ quarters intact. This was 20 $\pm$ ' from Little Creek which ran a good stream. The other 2 condors



Gymnogyps californianus

May 11, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

had been across the stream about 50 yds. away. I investigated that area & found two stinking & partly dried squirrel bodies. Some meat was left in a pliable state. Where adult was standing, the squirrel had a 1" square piece of hide plucked off. This one had one hind leg missing & a hole at throat & side. The other carcass also stunk & was drying up fast, & both had beetles (*Staphylinids* they appeared). This carcass had rear half missing & a detached hind leg close by. Apparently then the birds "go for" old meat at too much of the time. About 6' from where I examined first squirrel I found a rattlesnake in a squirrel hole (& shot snake). Another possible bird menace. This spot where telephone line crosses Little Creek seems to be a favorite - saw condors on ground here before. Then set out 2 freshly shot squirrels (abdomens ripped open) and the snake near my former bait (sheep). Then drove to center of the "burn" but saw no condors nearby; did see 2 circling low <sup>with</sup> several turkey vultures about 1 mile SE of where power line crosses Famoso road, & (8:55), & about 2 p.m. saw 1 descend about 1 mile S. of same point. Fair breeze continued. At 2:48 I was back at my first observation station about 4 mi. E. of Reprock Corner. I saw then 4 condors & 8+ turkey vultures circling 100' - 500' over





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May 11, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Calif.

a spot  $2 \pm$  miles S. of me as if rising from spot where I saw first few today. By 2:55 I saw 2 go down as if to alight at 2 different spots  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile E. of that area. 3:05, I again saw 2 circle down about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile apart about 2 miles SE of me. Again saw one descend between the hills somewhat ( $\frac{1}{4} \pm$  mile) W. of the previous 2 at 3:10. 3:13, I saw 1 about 2 miles to E.; it soared S. about 2 miles, then N.  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile & spiraled slowly down between the hills. 3:25, 4 condors & 5 turkey vultures were circling & rising about 2 miles to SSE. The condors rose to  $1000 \pm$  altitude, then at least 2 headed eastward as if "going home". At about 3:40 I saw 2 about 2 miles S. of me, one at  $100 \pm$  & 1 at  $500 \pm$ . Both circled & rose. The lower rose to about level of cumulus clouds ( $2000 \pm$  altitude) and at 3:45 gave a wing dip & started a long glide in the direction of Breckenridge Mtn. (I suppose the other did likewise). 4 p.m., I saw an adult about 2 miles SSE. It circled & rose to  $800 \pm$  altitude, then slowly descended circling & was  $100 \pm$  over hills with another condor at 4:07. ~~This~~ Then it rose again & glided SE for perhaps 1 or 2 miles, then circled  $4 \pm$  times & glided S. (lost at 4:17). Then I saw another adult circle & rise ~~to~~ to  $1000 \pm$  about 2 miles S. of me (lost at 4:22). Apparently the "home roost" is to SE of this area. Fair NW wind, sky  $\frac{1}{10}$  cumulus. Saw no more by 4:30.



Gymnogyps californianus

May 12, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Kern Co.

Drove to a point about 11 miles east of Famoso about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile S. of Little Creek. Shot several squirrels (Citellus) & placed there, & those shot yesterday, in the open & parked atop a knoll to watch. About 400 yds. SW of me I placed 3 squirrels near top of a hill, & 5 about 700 yards to WSW near top of another hill. From my knoll I could see both spots & also the area where I placed 2 squirrels yesterday. Then 10 squirrels were all shot & most had guts protruding through skin. At 9 a.m. I was set to watch; there was a fair breeze from SW, sky clear, considerable haze, 72°F. 9:22, I saw one condor about 2 miles to SE - it put feet down & descended rapidly to between 2 hills as if to alight. Examined a sheep carcass near my bait this morning - it was several weeks old but had been dragged about 30' downhill from its original position, & the ground marks indicated it had lain at least a few days at one spot before being moved. Hide & skeleton except for 1 foreleg were ~~so~~ together though there were several large holes in the hide. I found one dark gray down feather - possibly condor - near this carcass. 9:38, I saw 3 condors and 8 $\pm$  turkey vultures circling in vicinity of where the one descended - the birds were mixed and extended from about 50 to 300' above ground. Watched one then from 9:42 - 9:51. It was about 2 miles to E. at



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May 12, 1946

Nr. Famoso, Kern Co., Calif.

first, heading S. at 300±' above hilltops. It went about 1½ miles S, then NW, taking into the breeze, feet down, wings flexed, for 3 or 4 minutes, then rising. Then it turned a circle & glided to W. for ½± mile with feet up, then put feet down & spiraled down rapidly & disappeared between two hills (where I saw first descend yesterday). The location of descent was ½± mile NE of a triangulation marker atop a hill - possibly Mt. Poso. One steep bank when descending was accompanied by wingtips bending down on inside of turn. 10:15, I saw 5 circling & rising with several turkey vultures over the canyon just N. of the triangulation mark. 10:23-27 This group, as usual, broke up in a minute or so. 10:23-27 I saw one soaring about 2 miles to SE - it spiraled down, feet hanging, & disappeared between the hills - this bird, & many others, have gone down with pumping oil wells a mile or so in the background. 10:38, I saw 7 & 9 turkey vultures circling & rising about 2 miles to SE. The group scattered within 2± minutes & the 4 condors headed SW - one went down as if to land at 10:41, & 3 condors with about 10 vultures circled in that vicinity (about 2 miles to SSE). 10:53, I saw 7 circling about ½ mile E. of the triangulation mark, & at 11:01, 1 condor and about 20 turkey vultures in that vicinity. I left my



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May 12, 1946

Nr. Mt. Paso, Calif.

station & drove via Corral Canyon toward Mt. Paso. at 11:48, from the road (about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile) I saw one adult & several turkey vultures flying low ( $50 \pm'$ ) over a branch of Paso Creek. At 12 I saw another condor. At 12:05 I was crossing creek about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile E. of Mt. Paso (the triangulation mark) & flushed 5 condors from near the creek about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile S. of the road. They flapped down canyon stream together. An adult & imm. alighted  $\frac{1}{4} \pm$  mile from where flushed, then took off again about 1 minute later - I had stopped car; this may have disturbed them; they may usually return to their food when disturbed by car. Last birding was about 1 mile E. of Mt. Paso. The 5 proved to be 4 imm. & 1 adult. Adult & 1 imm. soared together - they left the others, then returned. all circled & rose, & 3 circled over me at 12:12 when I parked  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile upstream. Apparently this area had been poisoned not too long ago. I found 2 cottontail rabbits & 2 ground squirrel in the open - slightly bloated but not maggoty - by seeing them from the road. Old bones & droppings showed that a large number of sheep formerly inhabited this section (earlier this year). I investigated the area where I flushed the condors (no turkey vultures were with them). about  $\pm 120$  yds. to





Gymnogyps californianus

May 12, 1946

Nr. Mt. Poso, Calif.

N. of the road, 100±' W. of Poso Creek, on a 5-10% E. facing short dry grass slope I found where I believe the birds were feeding. I found 2 squirrel tails with meat & bone pulled out (& skin turned inside out) for basal 3" - these tails were separate from the rest of skeleton. There were two spinal columns with ribs & pelvis attached, one with a single hind leg attached (skinned out & bone cleaned to foot) & the other without. <sup>Two</sup> skulls, cleaned, & entire except for one arch. A wet twisted shredded piece of skin (about 6 sq. inches). <sup>2</sup> detached <sup>separate</sup> forelegs, skin gone to wrist, & fairly cleaned of meat. Ribs were spread wide, the sternum gone, but only a few were broken off. One stomach & intestine, & another stomach. The latter was wet & brown - possibly was regurgitated. Two cordor "backles" were in the vicinity. One entire ramus lay near a skull. The "meat" was scattered over a 20' diameter area. In a walk 100 yds. further down stream I found 3 dead squirrels on open ground - juicy & limp but not maggoty; skin unbroken, eyes dried up - apparently food plentiful here. About 50' upwind from these remains was the striking corpse of another squirrel - this one was juicy & soft & much hair had fallen off. Stomach protruded outside the body. Two legs were cleaned of meat & fur to the wrist,



Gymnogyps californianus

May 12, 1946

Nr. Mt. Paso, Cal. F.

and one foreleg was missing. This stream - Paso Creek - is here about 2-3' wide & running well, clear water. It is open & the country is free of trees & brush so doubtless condors could drink here. At 12:35 a near-adult circled  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from me, then over me ( $150 \pm'$ ) as I examined the remains. I gathered the remains & photographed them - ~~at least~~ <sup>at least</sup> large portions of both stomachs & both intestines were present. I found only 2 lower rami, & 5 separated legs (one on spine). I saved this material for future study. I left this feeding area at 1:15 & went on to top of Mt. Paso (the triangulation marker). At 1:22 from there I saw 4 condors with several turkey vultures about 1 mile to N., circling low over the hills. I then placed some bait about 500 yds. to W. of top of Mt. Paso ~~near~~ <sup>on</sup> top of a ridge where it could be observed. This bait consisted of a highway killed jack rabbit, 2 poisoned cottontails (one bleated), one squirrel shot about 11:30 a.m., one found on the highway, & 1 poisoned - none were over 2 or 3 days dead I would judge, & the jack rabbit killed today probably. Returned to top of Mt. Paso to watch at 1:35. At about 2 p.m. I saw a turkey vulture on the ground about 1 mile to NNE. At 2:12 I noticed a condor there, feeding on some object on the ground at its feet (squirrel probably). A buzzard stood



Gymnogyps californianus

May 12, 1946

N. Mt. Posg Calif.

quietly about 10' downhill from the condor. The condor put head down for 2-5 seconds, then raised it for about the same interval. About 2:20 a second vulture alighted & walked up the slope to near the condor. The condor fed on - it appeared to be an immature with some orange on head. Rarely did over 5 seconds pass without the head coming up for a look around. At times the buzzards seemed within about 6'. At 2:24 a 3<sup>rd</sup> turkey vulture landed & the 3 stood  $15 \pm'$  from condor. One vulture walked up to condor, then retired to the circle again after a few seconds. Evidently the condor was standing on its food & pulling at it with bill, the body being in a horizontal standing position. A fourth vulture in the group at 2:28. These birds were on a  $10 \pm \% E.$  slope; the ground was sparsely covered with dry grass (3-4" high). After 2:34 the feeding was slower, & 10-20 sec. pauses intervened between nibbles. The bird fed facing N, then N, S, E, ~~N~~, & N again at 2:41. By 2:41, 7 turkey vultures loitered around the lone condor within about 20'. Once the condor walked toward a buzzard, neck outstretched - the buzzard retreated & condor <sup>fed</sup> apparently on a morsel at that spot. Apparently more than one carcass or morsel present. Twice I saw the condor stretch out its neck & apparently lean over



Gymnogyps californianus

May 12, 1946

Mt. Poso, Calif.

forward with breast on the ground as if wiping  
or scratching <sup>then</sup> neck on the ground. 19 vultures,  
from 6' to 30' from condor. At 2:45 the condor shook  
up its wings, then took off to NE with 25 flaps.  
The ~~to~~ vultures scattered as condor flew off. By  
2:50, condor was 300 ±' high, & all the ~~to~~ vultures  
were circling below, having left the feeding spot.  
By 4 p.m. I saw no more condors from Mt. Poso - fair  
wind from NW continued. 82°F. 80°F. at 4 p.m. Drove  
down the Poso Creek road to Porterville highway.

May 13, 1946

Mt. Poso, Calif.

Drove from Delano to Mt. Poso, arriving 8 a.m. I put  
a freshly shot jack rabbit with the 3 other rabbits  
its & 3 squirrels I had out as bait about 500 yds.  
W. of Mt. Poso. Sky clear, air warm, faint breeze,  
considerable haze (Buckneridge Mtn. to SE, barely  
discernible). At about 8:30 turkey vultures appeared:  
breeze faint to light from W. From Mt. Poso I could see the  
areas where I put 5 & 3 squirrels yesterday, but neither  
yesterday nor today have I seen avian activity in that  
area. 9:32, I saw one condor soaring about 2 miles  
to E. It wandered over the hills at 200 ±' altitude. I  
saw then 3 dark birds on a slope below it - a few  
moments later, one condor was there (I believe condor  
landed & buzzards left) at 9:42. Condor acted as if feed-  
ing on squirrel. The vultures returned 1 by 1 & by 9:50






Gymnogyps californianus

May 13, 1946

Mt. Poso, Kern Co., Calif.

there were 5 within 20' of condor. 9:51, the condor ran toward a vulture 10 $\pm$ ' away, wings folded, taking about 3 steps per minute, for about 30 steps. The buzzard ran away in a curve , & condor followed. The condor resumed feeding. 9:54, an immature circled over the standing group, feet up. 9:57, the imm. alighted 30 $\pm$ ' W. of group & slowly walked up to it. Only 4 vultures were left. The condors & vultures walked about occasionally & seemed not to feed. Only 3 vultures at 10:00. Both condors apparently immatures. Twice I saw one condor walk briskly toward a vulture, the vulture retreating, keeping 6 $\pm$ ' ahead, & condor then acting as if looking for food there. 10:03, 2 vultures remaining, the condors about 20' apart. The condors have not been closer than about 6' together. 10:07, another vulture left. By 10:08, one, then the other, had raised its wings & re-folded them. 10:08, one held wings half extended, then took off to NW (downhill & upwind, 10 $\pm$ % slope) with 3 gallops & 11 flaps, then descended into the canyon bottom 100 $\pm$  yds. downhill. The second bird took a similar course 30 $\pm$  seconds later, taking off with 8 flaps. One vulture was left at the spot. 10:20, I saw 2 cruising at about 200' x 500' altitude about 1 1/2 miles to NW. 10:26, 3 now, about 1 mile SSW of first position. Two circled together at 100 $\pm$ ', & one above them at 500 $\pm$ '. Fair breeze from N. commenced.

Est. 1902

14

Gymnogyps californianus

May 13, 1946

Mt. Poso, Kern Co., Calif.

The birds approached the vicinity of  $6 \pm$  low circling vultures, then worked N. again, rising (10:32). 10:39, they were scattered for  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile at  $500 \pm'$  in vicinity of my squirrel bait - but they continued on (at least 5 condors today it appears). 10:41, I saw 4 condors circling & rising over where I saw the 2 on ground - no vultures were with them. The group split up - 2 soared toward me while one ~~worked~~ <sup>worked</sup> to E. One of the approaches dipped behind a hill about 1 mile S. At 10:50 there were 4 nearly above me at  $500 \pm'$ ; they rose quickly to  $1000 \pm'$  & set out to NNW. One had a large notch out of ~~set~~ right side of tail tip, & one a  $\#4 \pm$  left primary missing. From I saw 2 give a wing dip as they commenced their long flex-glide. There were about <sup>100</sup> 50 yds. apart, & 1 trailed  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile. 10:53, the one which loitered to S. soared behind a hill about 1 mile to ESE as if to land - so at least 5 condors present. At least 3 of the 4 were adults, one an immature. 11:00, I saw one condor descend as if to alight between hills about 2 miles to NW, to W. of power line  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile. There certainly seems to be little reason for where the birds feed - there is plenty of food close to Mt. Poso. 11:07, I saw two rise above the hills where 11:00 bird went down - these circled low, occasionally flapping, & at 11:10 descended between the hills again.



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Mt. Poso, Kern Co., Calif.

near same spot. At 11:12, I saw 11 condors about  
(so at least 13 total)  
1 1/2 miles to SE. 8 were circling in one ~~group~~ <sup>group</sup>. They  
glided N. in a loose group, strung out about 1 mile.  
At least 7 continued N - in direction of the "triangle".  
Two loitered behind. There were 3 vultures on ground  
near where I saw them this morning (about 1 mile to  
SE). One condor spiraled down, feet hanging, & landed  
in midst of vultures at 11:17 with 3± gentle  
flaps. The vultures flew off as adult descended  
but <sup>3±</sup> were on the ground again by 11:20. The second  
condor circled over but did not land or put feet down.  
By 11:23 the condor had walked about 60 yds. to  
N., occasionally stopping. It pecked desultorily at the  
ground area, then took off (11:23), flap-glided low  
over the hills, then circled & rose until 500±' over its  
takeoff spot at 11:29. Two vultures flew close to  
it for 2± minutes during <sup>the soaring</sup> first part, & 2 were still  
with it at 11:31 when the bird (an immature)  
commenced a northward fly glide. This bird was a  
"near-adult"; notch in center back secondaries, bilateral,  
notch in left side of tail. This bird swung nearly  
over me (500±' up) where an imm. was circling,  
then continued toward the burn alone. By 2 p.m. I saw  
no more condors; fair wind, sometimes intermittent; temp-  
erature 77°F., sky 4/10 cirrus & cirro-stratus, haze  
lessened (Bear mtn. visible). From Mt. Poso, Adelaide



Gymnogyps californianus

May 13, 1946

Mt. Poso, Calif.

Mtn. is prominent to the SSE & is apparently an important point on flight path from Buckenridge - Bear Mtn. area. By 4 p.m. saw no more though I searched the horizon every few minutes with binocs. Wind about 25 miles per hr. - stronger than usual - from NW. By 7:30 no condors appeared & vultures were rare; sky  $\frac{3}{10}$  cirrus; wind increasing (about 30 m.p.h.). Perhaps the condors took advantage of the wind to go to an especially distant feeding ground, or perhaps they returned to roost by a "short cut", by-passing the rolling hills as their updrafts were unnecessary.

May 17, 1946

Berkeley, Calif.

Mr. Richardson of Porterville said that about 20 yrs. ago he saw two condors overhead on Tule Indian Reservation. He also said that he had had talked with John F.F. Latta of Bakersfield about condors, & that Latta might have historical information of value. Rollo Beck said he had once hunted condors.

May 20, 1946

Stanley Jewett told me that Bob Beck (sp.?), of Fish & Wildlife, now in Boise(?), told him that once he found a condor buried in the sand, the wings chopped off. Mrs. <sup>Jeany</sup> Linsdale said that Lloyd Lewis had lived much on San Emigdio Ranch at Stockdale. Yesterday I overheard Laidlaw Williams



1:25 - add num. down  
:30 - 3 up; add 2 num. ad. left  
w. 5. 7. + 7 + 1

Gymnogyps californianus

May 29, 1946

Berkeley, Calif.

telling someone that if they wanted to see condors they should contact ~~Red~~ Peyton at Fillmore.

May 29, 1946

E. of Famoso, Calif.

I drove from Delano to MacFarland, thence eastward on the Woody road until about 1 mile from the junction with Famoso - Woody road. Sky clear, fair NW breeze, air warm. My attention was attracted by about 8 milling turkey vultures about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile E. of the road, & I stopped to watch. At least 5 of the ~~vultures~~ <sup>vultures</sup> perched on the dry-grassy slope of a small hill, & at 1:25 I saw an adult condor circling 100'± above them. At 1:30 this condor descended as if to alight about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile S. of the vultures & over a ridge from there. The condor spiraled with legs extended & wings strongly flexed, & once or twice gave a "dip" of wings. I saw an immature also disappear behind the same hill. About 1:30 the turkey vultures took off - perhaps disturbed by my presence - and ~~at~~ I saw 3 condors rise from the area. These 3 were one adult with left wing ~~thin~~, 1 imm., & one?. They circled with the buzzards, then drifted off about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile to S. & separate from the buzzards, then scattered & worked back toward same area where they rose. At 1:40 I saw one



Gymnogyps californianus

May 29, 1946

Nr. Mt. Poso, Calif.

descend behind a hill & at 1:45 a second in the same locality as before (not especially as if to land). 1:55, I saw 2 soaring at about 200' altitude over same area. I walked about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile E. of road to a knoll. I saw from there at 2:10 4 condors circling over the rolling hills  $\frac{3}{4} \pm$  mile E. of me. They ranged from about 50 to 300' in altitude & were spread at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile. 2:18, 3 visible still, the adult with 2 gaps in left wing ("A") circling low over the baldish hill where I first saw the condors today, & 2 about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile to S. 2:20, a second was 300'± above "A", legs down, wings flexed, heading very slowly into the wind. Mt. Fulton was directly beyond the bald hill, & Breckenridge mtn. conspicuous to the SE. about 25 burros grazed near me. By 2:25 I saw neither condors nor turkey vultures in air so walked toward the bald hill. At 2:29 I saw 1; & about 2:32, 3 condors over the bald hill - a fourth rose from  $\frac{3}{8} \pm$  mile S. of them & all circled <sup>together</sup> at about 300' altitude. At 3:35, a lone vulture with them. 3:36, 3 circled, one about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile N. of the 2. The southern two glided southward & I saw 2 others about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile ahead of them also heading S. at about 300' altitude (2:40). I walked to the top of the bald knoll but saw no condors or vul-



Gymnogyps californianus

May 29, 1946

Nr. Mt. Poso, Calif.

terea near - at 2:55 I saw one condor descending apparently over the Little Creek area N. & somewhat E. of Mt. Poso. I returned toward the road & car. At 3:05 I saw 7 condors circling in a group over where the 2:55 bird was. At 3:10, still 7 there, spread  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile horizontally &  $400 \pm'$  vertically. 3:14, 3 still there & 2 others  $\frac{1}{2} \pm$  mile to NE of them - apparently scattering and/or descending. The 5 minutes + as a group I believe unusually long. 3:17, 3 were circling about 1 mile E. of where the 7 were - low, possibly descending, & 1 was about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile W. of them - no others visible. Fair NW breeze continued. I returned to car & drove on to junction of McFarland-Woody & Famoso-Woody roads. There was a sheep camp with about 500 sheep there, just S. of Little Creek. I continued on  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile to E. & saw then one adult circling & rising <sup>over</sup> the ridge just S. of Little Creek. This adult had ~~four~~ <sup>or</sup> 5 nicks in trailing edge of wing & # 7 ( $\pm$ ) left primary was about half grown. This bird rose to  $300 \pm'$  & glided over the road to NW. Then I saw another adult flap-circling & rising over the flat ground near the road about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile ahead of me. This bird soared away from the road & skimmed the foothills when a car went up the road. The condor nearly met its shadow in gliding close to the slope per



Gymnogyps californianus

May 29, 1946

N. Mt. Poso, Calif.

Wings under 10' from ground at times. This bird flapped up to 7 times occasionally, circled & rose over the N. slope, then I lost it (about 3:45 at 300±' above ridge S. of Little Creek). Near the spot from which this condor rose I found a turkey vulture feeding on a ground squirrel. The vulture pecked, then raised head & looked about, condor style, & held carcass down with foot. The squirrel was old but soft & had much meat remaining. The tail was separate from carcass & about distal 1/2 was in 1 piece. Head was separate from body & skull broken into 3 or more separate pieces. Internal organs apparently dried up. Hind leg & flank had apparently recently been nibbled on. I drove then to top of Mt. Poso, arriving at 4:18 p.m. I saw no condors from there by 5 p.m. the breeze remained fair. I visited my bait of 3 rabbits & 3 squirrels there - all were dry & crackly. The head of the jackrabbit had some meat removed. One squirrel had head removed and about half of <sup>brain</sup> ~~cranium~~ case missing. Another had one hind leg disarticulated & bare of meat. Otherwise, no sign of condor or other avian activity. I drove back to Delano. Both Poso & Little Creek still have a good stream of water. Until I approached Mt. Poso today I saw not one





Gymnogyps californianus

May 29, 1946

Nr. Mt. Poso, Calif.

ground squirrel - the poisoning must have been quite effective (or starvation?). 5:50 - I stopped on road about 50 yds. from a feeding turkey vulture. The bird flew a few seconds after I opened door. I examined the food - it was a soft but not rotten ground squirrel. The meat & skin was gone from most of the upper surface. Stomach remained in but other ~~was~~ internal organs gone. Low Hind legs eaten down to ankles. Neck & hind head eaten. Skin of under side intact. Ribs mostly cleaned. This is freshest squirrel upon which I have seen a turkey vulture feed.

May 30, 1946 (Memorial Day)

Nr. Mt. Poso, Calif.

My uncle L R Buckingham drove me from Delano to the junction of McFarland-Woody & Famoso - Woody roads. Arrived about 7:30, & by 7:50 I was atop a knoll about 1/4 mile S. of Little Creek from where I could see Mt. Poso about 2 miles to S. & from where I had watched before. Sky 3/10 cirrus & clearing, steady breeze of about 15 m.p.h. from south. Air warm (est. 70°). Saw one turkey vulture about 7:30 & about 2 others by 8 a.m. No sign of the sheep today - probably they moved nearer to Famoso. 4 or 5 sets of concrete foundations indicate that there has been oil exploration here in the past - its failure accounts for the uninhabited state

9:57 - 1

Gymnogyps californianus

May 30, 1946

Nr. Mc. Pass, Calif.

of these condor feeding grounds now. By 8:30 I saw several turkey vultures but no condors. 8:40, I saw 1 or 2 turkey vultures on the ground & apparently feeding on squirrels at 3 different spots just north of the road north of me - that area had not been poisoned yet when I last visited this area about 2 weeks ago. 8:47, I saw one probable condor about 2 miles E. of me gliding N. at horizon level. By 9:30, sky  $7/10$  cirro-stratus & breeze often absent for many minutes at a time - soaring conditions apparently poor in calm periods. Breeze was westerly by 9:40. At 9:57 I saw one about 1 mile N. of me at  $800 \pm'$  altitude gliding NW. I lost track of it after 3 or 4 minutes - at that <sup>time</sup> ~~time~~ it seemed to be about over the power line about 1 mile N. of the McFarland-Woody road. Breeze had shifted to NW, & sky  $2/10$  cirrus. At 10:02 I saw same, or another, in that area, circling & wandering as if searching, & at 10:10 I saw a group of 4 near this one - so at least 5 seen at once. 10:15, I saw one circling about 2 miles NE of me at  $500 \pm'$  altitude & watched it until 10:20. The bird glided a mile or more to S. in a shallow glide, then circled without rising & gradually descended behind the hills there (about 2 miles to E. of me). 10:27 I saw

: 25 - 1 ad., fl. + n. then 2 ad + 1 imm in 4 TV;  
ad #8 left pr., got right tail, lost tail.

: 30, ad + imm. 5 ± TV. ad fl down in all #8, 9, 10, 11, 12.  
: 31, ad + 2 imm. 33, ad + imm to N., then in (2 got 2 fl + pr.) re-  
mained 3/4 mile S.  
N. 2 circled + none

Gymnogyps californianus

May 30, 1946

N. Mt. Poso, Calif.


one about 1 mile NE of me (same bird?) gliding NW at 500±' altitude. It continued on about 1½ miles (about over power line, 10:31) then circled 3± times & headed SW at 1000±' altitude. I lost it at 10:36 when it seemed about 1 mile SE of Reproth Corner. By 11:15 I saw no more. Some "plinkers" were shooting from a car about ½ mile W. of me. I walked N. across Little Creek & at 11:25 saw an adult condor flapping & circling as if it had risen from about ¼ mile N. of road. It crossed to the N. slope just S. of Little Creek & rose by circling. This bird had short left #8 primary, a gap in left wing next to body, a notch in right side of tail (W), & some other gaps. About 4 turkey vultures joined the condor, then an adult & imm. condor. The first adult left & another immature joined the remaining 2 condors. They circled & rose, working over the flat at 300±' altitude, adult with feet down. One imm. was dark & had a short right #8 primary. The other had a gap in left primaries, another in outer secondaries, & had a dark spot in the <sup>center of</sup> white underwing patches. Adult & imm. soared N. about 1 mile while the other (last described) circled near me. I lost all to view about 11:35 - the N. two were circling at 1000±' when last seen. About 85° estimated, sky ¾/10 thin



Gymnogyps californianus

May 30, 1946

Nr. Mt. Poso, Calif.

cirrus at 11:45. The gunnison among feeding condors is bad - we can't protect all feeding areas from such. I hiked N. from the road and was about  $\frac{3}{8}$  mile N. of it when <sup>(at 12:02)</sup> I saw two adult condors about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile to W. of me circling over a ridge. The birds drifted downwind in the circling  until at the N. slope of ridge just S. of Little Creek. Then they circled & rose. Another adult appeared & circled above them, then when at 400±' altitude glided E (at 12:06). At 12:07 the lower two were gliding E. too - over Little Creek. Retrogressing - shortly after seen first, one of this pair chased the other briefly. (Apparently immatures don't do this). I could identify none of these as birds I had seen earlier today tho didn't have too good a view. The pair glided to the E. end of the ridge (about 2 miles), then circled & rose until at about 2000' altitude, one 500±' above the other. Then at 12:16 one headed W. & passed nearly over me. It gave one slow "dips" & <sup>increased</sup> ~~accelerated~~ much in horizontal velocity for several seconds thereafter. The bird was in a flex glide of course. It veered to NW, & then I saw another (of the pair probably) following  $\frac{1}{4}$ ± mile behind & 300±' below. They continued on to NW until at least 2 miles from me (12:22 - estimated 3 miles in 6 minutes = 30 m.p.h.), then descended





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Nr. Mt. Poso, Calif.

to W. in a fast glide. The lower bird shot well ahead of the upper in descent. They seemed to be heading for the <sup>area</sup> ~~spot~~ where I saw 5 earlier today. Retrogressing again - while the two circled nearby about 12:04, one stretched its legs far down once & retracted them in a few seconds. There seemed to be no effect on flight so I believe it was a "leg stretch"; the first I recall having seen in air - the legs were out much farther than the usual "legs down" attitude. A single turkey vulture circled above the two when they circled & rose to 2000± about 12:15. I believe condors & vultures associate at roosts, feeding, in air currents, & other places because of similar interests & not because of sociability. I continued on cross-country to the power line near where it crosses <sup>McFarland -</sup> ~~Fanno~~ Woody road. By 2 p.m. I had seen no more condors - and only 2 or 3 turkey vultures. I saw the poisoning crew working about 1 mile N. of road at the power line. The crew consisted of 4 horsemen who rode about 100 ft. apart back & forth over the country. At squirrel burrows I saw much grain (oats) in the open up to 6 or 8' from burrow. Dead squirrels were rare in the country I traversed - I found one carcass apparently recently chewed by a vulture or condor - spine & tail were in one piece (& a few ribs). I found no definite internal organs. Some pieces of skin were wet.



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May 30, 1946

Nr. Mt. Poso, Calif.

and matted as if chewed. Skull was clean & broken.  
I hiked on toward McFarland but saw neither condors nor turkey vultures the rest of the afternoon. The area N. of this road had "poison out" signs for several miles, & I saw no live squirrels there.

May 31, 1946

Nr. Mt. Poso, Calif.

At 8 a.m. I was atop same knoll as yesterday morning near junction of McFarland-Woody & Famoso-Woody roads. Sky 6/10 cirrus & cirro-stratus, fair S. breeze, & about 70°F. At 8 a.m. I saw 2 turkey vultures on ground, apparently feeding, & at least 2 others in air. 8:30, 3 vultures at one spot & 5 at another about <sup>500</sup>300 yds. N. of Little Creek near me - so food apparently present. SE breeze continued - this morning breeze would favor condors coming from the Buckenridge & Bear Mtn. areas. Then, later in the day, the usual NW breeze would favor their return to those mountains. At 8:53 I saw 1, then 2, about 2 miles to NE toward Blue Mtn., circling at 800±' altitude. At 8:59 there were 3, a mile or so NW of first position. The birds then glided W., 1 followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> about 1/2 mile behind. 9:03, there were 4 about 1 mile N. of me heading W.. At 9:06 they had grown to 6 - 4 adults & 2 immatures. These, with 1 turkey vulture, circled together about



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Nr. Mt. Poso, Calif.

1 1/2 miles to NW of me, & rose higher, & drifted about <sup>1 mile</sup> ~~a mile~~ to E. At 9:09 the group broke up & strung off to W, 1 or 2 at a time. In the group, the 2 imm. were 2nd & 3rd. lowest birds. The vulture trailed the bunch. The group scattered more than, and at 9:15 I saw & about 1 mile W. of the 9:09 position scattered over about 1 square mile at 1000±' altitude. I watched one of these until 9:40. It glided to SW slowly for about 2 miles, circled & wandered in that vicinity at same high altitude, then glided fast to N. and at 9:32 was about at its 9:15 position. It continued on to N., then began wandering at lower altitude (300±') apparently near the power line about 3 miles to NNW of me, & there I lost it at 9:40. By then sky was completely overcast with cirro-stratus & a 20± mph wind blew from S., & the vultures had disappeared from the near vicinity. At 10:27 I saw 2 condors circling about 3 miles to N. near the power line - and still at 10:45, wandering over the area at 300±' altitude. On a crossbar of one power line tower was perched an eagle or condor - probably the former - in that same vicinity. I left my stand at 11 a.m. & hiked northward, cross country. Spent some time hunting reptiles, so arrived about



Gymnogyps californianus

May 31, 1946

Mt. Poso, Cal. F.

2 miles NNW of my 11:00 position at about 12:55. The bird on power tower was a golden eagle. I saw then at least 4 - possibly 7 - condors circling low about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles N. of me (about 2 miles N. of McFarland - Woody road at power line +  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile W. of power line). I saw 2 condors on a dry-grassy ridge there, & I saw 3 others alight - 5 on ridge within about 20' at 12:59. The breeze had shifted to W. about 11 a.m. & to NW about 12:30. Sky 9/10 alto-cumulus & alto-stratus. Breeze at times absent - perhaps the condors were becalmed. I sat to watch. The condors walked about occasionally. at 1:14 I saw one fly at another - the other flapped about 15', then both alighted. <sup>12:19</sup>  
<sup>12:18</sup>  
<sup>10'</sup> one again flew up & flapped off about 20', then alighted & walked back to the group. 1:28, 3 of the condors took off about 30 seconds apart & flew behind the ridge. The last took off to W., flapping hard, turned after about 10 flaps, & continued to E. behind the hill still flapping (20+ flaps on takeoff & turn). Two condors remained on ground as before. The power crew rode by about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile N. of me. 1:35, one condor landed about 20' to E. of the perched two & apparently walked over to the other 2. The 3 made a compact group. Fair breeze from NW. 1:41, 3 still on ground, perhaps 20' between birds. 1:49, a fourth condor alighted






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May 31, 1946

Nr. Mt. Poso, Calif.

by the 3, & one perched one ran a few steps as if to get out of the way. 1:54, one soaring near the perched bunch - probably 1 of them as only 3 visible on ground. This one circled about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile SW of the group then, & another soared near the bunch. 1:58, 4 visible on ground in a close group - these birds barely visible because of haze & heat waves at about 2 miles distance. 2:01, 1 condor & 3 vultures circling 200'± over the perched 3 (or 4). 2:03, the flying condor alighted in the bunch. I hiked toward the perched birds. at 2:35 I was just W. of the power line having come perhaps a mile, but the perched birds still appeared to be about 2 miles distant. There were at least ~~4~~<sup>5</sup> condors in the group - possibly 7 or 8 - and apparently 3± turkey vultures. I hiked 15 minutes more toward the group. At 3:05 I stopped to watch - there were 5 condors , one about 100' from the rest on a rounded grassy ridge about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile W. of the Porterville-Bakersfield highway perhaps  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles N. of the McFarland road. There seemed to be a light colored object on the ground - a sheep carcass probably. I was still about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles to SE of the birds. 3:10, only 4 visible, all at the carcass & occasionally tugging at it with bills. Two flew up flopping once & realighted. One took off at 3:14. Two took off 30± sec. later when first soared 50±' overhead, & the last at 3:15. One apparently realighted about 20'

07 - off 5, then E  $\frac{1}{2}$  m - then me -  
14 - 1000' 200', 1000'.

Gymnogyps californianus

May 31, 1946

Nr. Mt. Poso, Calif.

from the carcass, then took off again at 3:17 & I saw 4 in air. all took off to SE-dawnhill & downwind it seemed - with many flaps. 3:20 - 4 in air, 2 at about 100' & 2 at about 400'; two turkey vultures alighted at ~~carcass~~ <sup>carcass</sup>. 3:21, one condor alighted between the two vultures at the carcass (they were 20±' apart). The vultures flapped off 10± seconds later. 3:22, a second condor alighted. One stood at or on the carcass, apparently feeding, & the other stood 15±' away. The latter walked around the carcass & tugged from side opposite to first condor. Both fed side by side then. 3:30, one feeding, head down for about 5 seconds, then up for about 4-7 seconds, the other bird standing calmly alongside. Sky 6/10 cirrus, fair NW breeze, visibility best of the day. 3:40, both apparently feeding side by side. 3:45, both at carcass still, apparently feeding, sometimes on opposite sides of carcass & sometimes on same side. I walked again, keeping the condors in sight. At 4:07 they took off, one about 15 sec. after the other, when I was about 1 mile away. The birds took off to S., downwind & dawnhill, then turned E. & flapped with few pauses for about 1/2 mile, then circled and began to rise. At 4:14, they were at about 1000' <sup>in feet down,</sup> altitude, about 1 1/2 miles ESE of the carcass & they continued to circle & rise. Both were adults.



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May 31, 1946

Nr. Mt. Poso, Calif.

They set off in a glide toward Breckenridge Mtn. until about 4 miles from me & at  $2000 \pm'$  altitude. There they circled again - and I lost them. <sup>at 4:22</sup> The NW breeze continued. The carcass was about 1 mile N. of a farmhouse - I did not have time to visit it. There were a few cattle in this area.

June 1, 1946

E. of McFarland, Calif.

At 6:30 a.m. I visited the carcass where I saw condors & turkey vultures yesterday - it proved to be a calf, still in the soft-hoofed stage. The hide was brown & white Hereford. The location was about  $8\frac{1}{2}$  miles E. of McFarland, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile W. of Porterville road, &  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles N. of McFarland-Woody road. The remains were on a rounded ridge covered with 3" crapped dry grass & higher dry volunteer oats. The slope was about 5%. There was a barbed wire fence about 200 yds. to W. & a farmhouse about 1 mile to S. The town of McFarland was clearly visible from there. The remains were <sup>in a line for</sup> about ~~100~~ <sup>50</sup> yds. Apparently the carcass first lay at the uphill end. There I found many tufts of hair & hide, about 20 pieces of condor-like down, a condor secondary, 2 condor "hockles", & a few turkey vulture feathers. <sup>50 $\pm$ '</sup> ~~100 $\pm$ '~~ down the slope from this was one ramus, & 50 $\pm$ ' further the other ramus. There were nearly cleaned & appar

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